

Justice at Salem
Reexamining the Witch Trials

William H. Cooke

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JUSTICE AT SALEM
Reexamining the Witch Trials
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Cover Photo: Old Burying Point, Salem.
John Hathorne, a judge from the witch trials, is
buried here. Photo by the author.

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To all of my friends and former colleagues
at the Baltimore City State's Attorney's Office.

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Foreword

By Conrad Jay Bladey
Anthropologist, Folklorist, Peasant.

The Salem witch trials took place in 1692 in a relatively isolated colony of the British Empire, which at the time was governed by a relatively conservative cultural elite. It was a place far away from thoughts evolving in Europe but importantly it was a place very distant from the places we find ourselves in today.

The cast of characters look like I do. They were Europeans. The script was in this language. It was written in a modern form of English but, their world was nothing like our own. Science was different, beliefs were different and their understanding of the realities and unexplainable mysteries surrounding them was vastly different from our own. Most historians have however, assessed this drama as if it were set within our own culture and within our own belief system. The main characters have long suffered judgment based upon paradigms of justice and human rights which were nothing like their own. It is refreshing to read a study which assesses these courtroom dramas from within the sets of cultural paradigms and values which shaped the lives and times of the participants. Let us take a look at that setting.

Chronologically the events took place just after the mid-point of the Early Modern period which lasted from AD 1500 to 1800. The trials began two years after a major victory for the concept of a constitutional monarchy- the defeat of James II by William of Orange at the Battle of the Boyne. It was the end of a turbulent century, which for England was focused upon the re-definition of the world order. While progress had been made toward the destruction of the great chain of being which linked all elements of the earth from soil to rocks plants to animals to humans and through their godlike kings to God himself the final blows which were to bring it crashing down following the American and French Revolutions had not occurred.

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Humans lived their lives in the small space between providence or Gods favor and the devil and his forces of evil. This paradigm was not simply a quaint novel. It was strongly held and a concrete cultural belief system which was as real in the 17th century as the political, cultural, scientific and religious paradigms which are found in the 21st century. We still today live in a world in which salvation via spiritual re-birth and deliverance via spiritual means are still strong beliefs for many. We also live in a world which is full of unexplained occurrences which range from deliverances to destructions. We simply account for them differently. We have given up the need to assign causality to a force other than that of the mathematical randomness of the world and chance concepts made popular only in the 18th century. To appreciate the wonder of other causes of these unexplained phenomena we have to return to Salem and to the 17th century.

Salem in the 17th century represented the English world view in its most conservative form. This was a Puritan culture. While it was divided, in a sense, from the Church of England it was still united by a shared world view and concept of the great chain of being. God and providence still fought their battle not spiritually but physically on the streets of the colony each day. This was one reasonable way to account for the unfolding of history which could not be explained in terms of human actions alone.

Relatively fresh in the minds of the colonists was the deliverance of the English nation and government from complete chaos and destruction by way of the discovery of the gunpowder plot of 1605 an act which occurred independently of the intervention of the state which had just happened upon the plotters by accident. This became known as a great deliverance by the hand of God fore it was not accomplished with any reference to the hand of man. Likewise for the residents of Salem it was important to account for the unexplained in concrete terms. When we review historical events which occurred in Early Modern Salem we must do it with this in mind and from within the culture itself “emically” rather from the point of view of the 21st century. This is what Mr. Cooke is doing in this re-examination of the phenomena of the Witch trials of Salem. If witches waged the devil’s war and they themselves attested to this by their practices, they must be regarded by us as they were at the time as concrete physical threats to the existence of a colony fighting

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for existence on the very edge of the world. If there were practicing witches in Salem then we must regard this as the horror that it was for the people trying to keep the colony safe. This is another good reason that this book is worth reading. But, were the laws abused?

Ruling elites both political and religious spend considerable time, efforts and resources in their roles as protectors and leaders of the community. While human frailty is a constant we must always take into account we can generally assess with considerable accuracy the intentions and motives of actions of leaders and the legislation and legal judgments of political entities when they are studied through time. It is not easy to enforce laws or for that matter to write them. The process is generally undertaken thoughtfully and one would think even more thoughtfully by a community at the edge of the world fighting for its existence and facing such a dangerous foe as evil itself. With this in mind could they afford anything less than broad enforcement of these laws? Would it not be best to err on the side of caution even though it might mean that the occasional innocent might be caught up in the net? Could they afford to let even one powerful agent of the devil through?

Considerable effort was placed into the prosecution of the witches at Salem. We must take that into account when we determine the perceived reality of the threat. At the time the community took witches seriously just as practicing witches took themselves seriously (as do, by the way, practicing witches in the 21st century of which there exist both good and bad by their own definitions). I do not think we can discount these heartfelt beliefs of the colonists once we have discovered them. Mr. Cooke addresses this matter well. While the construction of legal systems is difficult and often very well intended enforcement is another matter. While laws may not be perfect they can be absolute. Human beings lacking perfection can often be guilty of error and inaccurate enforcement of well-defined laws. Humans also can be guilty of the self-serving application of even the best of laws. The one aspect of our own time that we can project into the past is that of the existence of human imperfection. This book takes this into account. Only when we open our minds to the existence of past cultural universes can we truly appreciate the wonders of the way our cultures have evolved over time. When we see life through the eyes of the seventeenth century colonists at the very edge of the world might we not also be able to see our own environment differently

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as well? Can we be content today that there are really not spiritual forces of evil bringing about physical outcomes in our communities and streets? Surely the unfolding of history, the near misses and the unexplained deliverances often continue to defy explanation. Perhaps a reflection here upon the perceived realities of Salem will help us see things we may have forgotten to observe in our own times and bring a realization of the existing limits to human understanding. Mr. Cooke has done a good job putting a human face upon efforts to do battle with the timeless mysteries of unknown causation faced by the colonists of seventeenth century Salem.

– Conrad Jay Bladey, North Linthicum, Maryland June 9, 2009

Preface

The witch trials at Salem fascinate us endlessly. I can still remember as a child visiting what was Salem Town. I was excited to see the place where witches were put on trial. I was sadly disappointed to learn that there weren't any real witches at Salem, or anywhere, and that the trials were a great injustice. This was the established truth that I, like most people, held for years and never seriously questioned. Still, there was always a part of me that wondered if we had it wrong. Perhaps, there really were actual witches in colonial New England and some of the accused were in fact guilty.

I have examined this hunch and have reviewed the primary sources and have concluded that there was actual witchcraft practiced in colonial New England. And that the witchcraft may have sometimes been effective and that its effects were not always dependent on the mindset of its victims. However, even if the witchcraft was not powered by demonic forces, it did at least cause psychosomatic effects on some. And some of the witches may have used more mundane tactics, such as simply poisoning and trickery to harass their communities. I believe that a careful reading of the evidence supports the view that there was witchcraft practiced, at least on some level.

Although witchcraft was practiced by some in colonial New England and some of the convicted were guilty, I argue that most of the people executed were likely innocent. We should not consider the events at Salem to be quaint historical oddities. Countless lessons have been drawn from the trials. And I suggest other lessons that we could learn as well. We should learn from what was done wrong and do our best to see that the society we live in enacts just and reasonable laws and follows them. I hope that this book helps with that discussion.

Also, in this book I have done my best to correct certain inaccuracies that exist not only in the public imagination, but also in the minds of some historians as well. I hope that this book presents a factually

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accurate depiction of the witchcraft trials, even if the reader doesn't always share the conclusions I have drawn from those facts.

About citations: I have made it a point to cite as much as I could. I would rather over cite than under cite. And I have tried to cite primary sources whenever possible. I have relied on a few secondary sources that I have found to be extremely helpful. They are listed several times in the endnotes and in the bibliography. I have cited in the Chicago Style because I found it to be a simple style that contains all of the relevant information.

I have on occasion cited Wikipedia where the information was of a general nature and not directly related to my thesis. At other times I have cited to Wikipedia in order to show how the popular view of the subject is wrong. I have mixed feelings about the resource. I use the site, enjoy using the site, and have even donated small amounts of money to the Wikipedia Foundation in the past. However, I did find inaccurate entries. I corrected a few of them.

About numbering of the citations: I did not restart my numbering after each chapter. There are two reasons for this. First, I think it is easier to look up citations when the numbers don't reset after each chapter. Second, I couldn't figure out how to do it anyway on my computer.

I like to think of this as a "free" book. I wrote this entire book on my laptop which runs on the Ubuntu operating system, which is a free "community developed, Linux-based" system – available at <http://www.ubuntu.com>. I used Open Office, a free and open source word processor, available at <http://www.openoffice.org> to write this book. I have found this program to be as good, if not better than, Word. As noted above, I used Wikipedia, although mainly as a starting point in my research. I have also used free books in the public domain available through Google Books – <http://books.google.com> – whenever possible. I am copyrighting this book under the Creative Commons Attribution Non-Commercial No Derivatives license. This book is available free for downloading on my site at <http://www.undertakerpress.com> . .

It is my intention for this book to be available under the Attribution Share Alike license ten (10) years after my death. I intend to benefit from any financial transactions involving this book during my life.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge my friends and co-workers, especially Peter Terech, Shawn Gaither and Shane McMahon, who

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have put up with me talking about this subject and my ideas on it for several months. They helped me to better develop the ideas in this book. I did most of my writing in my home, although sometimes I took my laptop to the Annapolis Cigar Company on Main Street – <http://www.annapoliscigar.com> – where I was able to work in the lounge. Rome Zaffaroni, the owner, and I often discussed this book and his comments also helped me in this process. My friend, Conrad Bladey – <http://www.cbladey.com> – has provided me with great insights and ideas on this project and deserves special recognition. Finally, I want to thank you, the reader, for taking the time to read this book. I trust that you will enjoy reading it and hope that you will send me any thoughts that you may have on the subject. If there are any corrections that need to be made, please send them as well.

Introduction

The average man on the street knows that witches were burned at Salem.¹ And the average man would, of course, be wrong.

Several years ago when I was just out of law school and needed work, I found employment as a temporary worker reviewing legal documents. One day while working at that horrible job, I somehow got into a discussion with another young lawyer, who was also a temp, about the Salem witch trials. I casually mentioned the fact that the alleged witches were hanged, not burned, as so many believed.

She smiled and then politely informed me of the truth by stating “Bill, I’m from Massachusetts. The witches were burned. They weren’t hanged.” She would not back down from this position.

Over the course of the next several days I supplied her with various websites and referred her to various books which provided strong evidence for my claim that the convicted witches were hanged and not burned. Shortly thereafter she conceded that she was wrong, although I still suspect that at least a part of her still believes that the witches were burned at Salem.

I have no idea how or why this myth of the burning witches got started or why it continues. I suspect that people get certain images in their heads and they are hard to get out. The image of an old hag or an attractive young woman being hauled out to a stake to be burned alive is very compelling.² And it was done in other parts of the world.³

Burning a witch does seem more logical than hanging one. Popular notions of witchcraft have witches flying around and using magic at will. Such a person would be very dangerous and would have to be dealt with harshly. Burning just feels like a more natural approach. It makes sure that the witch really is dead and unable to come back in bodily form. And it feels like an appropriate means to send her off to Hell. Of course, if you were really dealing with witches, any school-aged child would ask, why wouldn’t they just use their powers to fly away so they aren’t executed?⁴

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Part of the problem may be this misunderstanding of witches. Witches are not mini-gods or goddesses. According to the traditional Puritan view the only power they have is from the Devil and the only power that the Devil has is power that God allows him to have.⁵ Witches are not free agents. They are the devil's servants and subject to the control of first God and then Satan.⁶ Although a few people did escape prison in Salem⁷, most did not and there is no evidence that anyone used supernatural powers to flee. Also, there is no record that I could find of a hanged witch being resurrected and physically harming another person after death, so there likely would be no special need to burn the body.

It is also important to note that witchcraft was seen as a civil offense in England and New England, not a religious one. New England at the time was not a theocracy, again despite popular belief.⁸ Almost all of the indictments against the witches alleged harm to others. None were charged with only the practice of the dark arts.⁹ Criminal courts, not religious ones, tried them.¹⁰ The witches themselves were not seen as demons. They were human beings who, out of weakness or hatred, had decided to align themselves with Satan. But they were not beyond redemption. Hanging, the usual method of capital punishment at the time, was thought effective enough. Burning would have been excessively cruel, unusual, and unnecessary.¹¹

People from all over the world know about the witch trials in Salem. But compared to contemporary witchcraft trials and executions across Europe, the Salem episode was very mild.¹² However, it was the biggest episode of witch prosecution in the English speaking New World. Prior to Salem there were only occasional prosecutions for witchcraft in English-speaking North America and even fewer convictions.¹³ After the Salem trials ended, no one else in the English-speaking New World would be executed for witchcraft.¹⁴

One of the most common misconceptions about Salem is that everyone who was executed was in fact innocent of witchcraft and that witchcraft did not and does not exist. We should not assume that to be the case.

Most people in America and indeed most people in the world have the belief that there is a God.¹⁵ And many of them believe that there exists a Devil, or some kind of a supernatural force, who is opposed to said God.¹⁶ If one is willing to accept that there is a God

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and that there is a Devil, then one cannot lightly dismiss the idea of witchcraft.

Witches are merely men and women who for whatever reason intentionally serve Satan.¹⁷ There could be many logical reasons why one might so clearly reject God and serve the Devil.

First, one might feel as though one is so hopelessly entangled in sin that there is no hope for one's self. You are damned regardless because you have not been reformed and can't seem to change. Instead of going to Hell without any protection, one might want to align one's self with Satan to gain favor in this life and the next.¹⁸

Second, one may look at God and look at Satan and decide that Satan is a more reasonable master. Anyone who has spent any time reading the Bible will be at least somewhat troubled by the reported behavior of God. God is seen as engaging in or supporting genocide, infanticide, and a whole host of other undesirable actions.¹⁹ In the New Testament, aside from all of the love stuff, Christ could quite easily be summed up as saying thus, 'Worship me or spend forever suffering the worst torments imaginable.'²⁰ Such a message does not inspire hope. God sometimes seems more like a mentally disturbed medieval prince, a modern day deranged third world dictator, or just your local homicidal sadist who keeps people imprisoned in his basement against their wills. The Devil, on the other hand, does not have a reputation that is quite so fierce. Sure he is a clever fellow, but being clever isn't bad. He won't punish you for having mistaken beliefs. Maybe we got it wrong. Maybe the Devil is a reasonable guy and it is God who is unreasonable. Yet, we are led to believe that the Devil is evil. But the only information we have about the Devil is from the Bible, which is one-sided. And as we noted, even God doesn't come across so great in those books. With this perspective, aligning with Satan does not appear too foolish, unreasonable, or evil.

Third, people who confessed to witchcraft have said that they had been coerced into joining the Devil's campaign. For example, Tituba, the Indian slave who was the first to confess, said she had been told by the devil and other witches to attack certain children and to worship Satan or they would harm her.²¹ This creates a difficult situation for some. It is frightening to face the prospect of eternal damnation, but that always feels like it is far way off in the future.

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They were concerned at that moment with being physically hurt. Out of fear they reluctantly joined the Devil's cause. Despite the fact that many of them regretted signing the Devil's book (which was how you traditionally joined Satan's side) and wish that they could have withstood the duress they were under, they believed that there was nothing they could do to get out of the pact with the Devil. Many of these poor people who had been threatened by Satan must have thought that the best thing to do at that point was to become a loyal servant of the Devil so they could avoid future afflictions from him.

Finally, there were those who were led astray by pure greed and impulsiveness. It may seem odd that someone would willingly surrender his eternal soul to the fires of Hell in return for limited gain in this life and world. However, some in the Salem witchcraft episode confessed to serving the Devil in return for material gain, some for such seemingly frivolous things as new clothing.²² On the world stage or in history we have seen men who have done horrible things for power and/or money in this life despite the risks to their own lives and to their eternal souls.²³ Having worked in the criminal justice field for some time now I have seen countless men and women who have risked many years of their lives for some very temporary and very small gains. Human beings are often not completely rational. It should not be hard to understand the fact that some may have given themselves over to the service of evil for benefits, even small ones, in this life.

So now after we have assumed that there is a God and a Devil, I have shown at least four reasons why someone may chose to serve the Devil as opposed to serving God or simply being neutral. Some might desire to serve Satan for any of the above reasons or for a combination of more than one of them. And there are probably more reasons why people might end up serving Satan that I have not yet imagined.

Now having established that persons might make a conscious choice to serve Satan, we have to ask if Satan has any need of the services of people. It may seem unreasonable to think that this fallen angel needs any help in doing his deeds. It is generally understood that angels are far more powerful than humans. The Puritans believed, however, that Satan had help. The Devil was not just one fallen angel, but was a collection of fallen angels who were serving together for evil purposes. There was Lucifer, the head devil, but others were with him. Cotton Mather, a respected minister, explained

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in his book *The Wonders of The Invisible World*, “[w]hen we speak of the devil, ‘tis a name of multitude. It means not one individual Devil, so potent and scient as perhaps a Manichee would imagine. But it means a kind, which a multitude belongs unto. Alas, the Devils, they swarm about us. . . .”²⁴ Fallen angels could use the help of humans in tempting other humans and in afflicting others who were opposed to the Satanic plot. Do devils strictly *need* human help? No, but why wouldn’t they like more help? And it has been observed that misery loves company. The Devil would love for Hell to be full of people.

So allow that there is a Devil, people might have a reason to serve him, and the Devil may want help from humans in advancing his goals. Traditionally one way that the Devil uses human beings is through witchcraft. Witchcraft is perhaps the second or third oldest profession.²⁵

Witchcraft is not unique to Christianity.²⁶ It existed before it and exists today outside of Christianity.²⁷ When we speak of witchcraft it is sometimes hard to define what we mean. Christians, especially of an earlier time, would have seen women priests in pagan religions as witches, while the pagans would not have seen them as such. For example, the priestesses at the Oracle of Delphi, who claimed to predict the future, were held in high regard in the ancient pagan world. But the early Christians condemned them as being in the service of Satan.²⁸

Nevertheless, there were women and sometimes men in the ancient world who were considered to be witches by the pagan people at the time.

Shamanism, which is closely related to witchcraft, has been called the world’s oldest religion.²⁹ Shamans or “witch doctors” have often used their power to help others and sometimes they have been known to do harm.³⁰

The Code of Hammurabi, which may be the oldest legal document in the world, expressly condemns the use of magic to harm others without justification.³¹

Howard Williams in his book *The Superstitions of Witchcraft* which was published in 1865 noted that witchcraft and the fear of it existed in the ancient world “[b]ut in the pagan history of neither Greece nor Rome do we read of holocausts of victims, as in Christian Europe, immolated on the altars of a horrid superstition.”³² Although

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he then notes in a footnote the case of Demosthenes, a woman who was condemned for witchcraft in ancient Greece around the time of the execution of Socrates.³³

Williams notes that the pagan Romans were concerned with the use of witchcraft to harm others.³⁴ But it was not until 373 A.D. the Roman, then Christian, empire was swept up in a witchcraft prosecution that could rival later prosecutions in medieval Europe.³⁵

The cynic would argue that this was merely a new obsession caused by a dangerous religion that was hostile to females and other faiths. However, it is possible that after Christianity was triumphant the Devil stepped up his assaults on the people. A Christian might argue that when Rome was pagan there was no need for the Devil to so violently attack the people as they were not saved anyway.

Witchcraft, however, does seem to be a universal, or near universal problem. On a semi-regular basis it is possible even today to read about witch hunts that still take place around the world.³⁶ To dismiss the people of Salem in 1692 as merely superstitious hysterics or worse as liars is to ignore history. Witchcraft was not unique to them. It was not unique to Christianity or to Europe. People from all over the world from all points in time who have never met have reported experiences with witches and with the effects of their craft. We should not just dismiss their accounts out of hand.

Perhaps at this point we can give strong consideration to the prospect that witchcraft is real. And that it is used as a tool by the Devil (if he exists) to war against God (if He exists). And that people sometimes have reasons for wanting to serve the Devil through the use of witchcraft. The next question is whether or not witchcraft existed at all in Salem in 1692.

I think that any reasonable person would concede that innocent blood was shed at Salem.³⁷ However, I think that it is just as reasonable to conclude that witchcraft did exist at Salem.

Without a doubt at the time there did exist the practice of “white magic” among the common people. Historian Elaine G. Breslaw in her book *Tituba, Reluctant Witch of Salem* wrote that:

Magical practices, whether ingrained in English folklore or borrowed from other cultures [Indian and/or African in this case], usually managed to escape the notice of the authorities.

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Those folk practices were part of the everyday mundane world; they seldom involved diabolical action or even evil intent, called maleficium.³⁸

The common people of Salem were not necessarily afraid to use what they called magic to attempt predicting the future or to try to cure an illness.³⁹ Some in the community were known as people who were experts in this field.⁴⁰

Cotton Mather addressed this in his book *Wonders of the Invisible World*.⁴¹ He did not accept that these practices are innocent. He detested them, however he did not raise them to the level of full blown witchcraft. He noted that there were:

Lesser *Sorceries* which they say, are too frequent in our Land... [T]he children of New-England [comparing the “children” of New England to the “children” of Israel who also are reported to have used magic. He is not discussing the literal children.] have secretly done many things pleasing to the Devil. They say, that in some Towns it has been an usual thing for People to cure Hurts with Spells, or to use detestable Conjurations, with Sieves, Keys, and Pease, and Nails, and Horse-shoes, and I know not what other Implements, to learn the things for which they have a forbidden, and an impious *Curiosity*.⁴²

Some of this may have been proto-science. Some of it may have been complete nonsense or superstition. But to the more traditional Puritans, the use of spells and talismans was opening the door to Satan and was a lesser form of witchcraft. The law did not usually get involved, however, unless there was an allegation that harm had been done as a result of one of these practices.

That a person may have used traditional forms of magic, which may have been proto-science or superstition or a cross between the two and believed that she had greater power than others is highly plausible. That some may have believed that they had magical skills and then used them or attempted to use them for ill should not seem so unbelievable. That if there is a Devil that he might have used these people to his ends should seem very believable. That a few of the people arrested for this were actually guilty is very likely.

This book addresses specific people involved with the witch trials

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and makes the argument that some of them were in fact guilty of witchcraft. This is not the first attempt to make such an argument. For example, Cotton Mather authored *The Wonders of the Invisible World* after the trials ended. Published in 1693, Mather wrote generally about witchcraft and outlined the cases against George Burroughs, Bridget Bishop, Susanna Martin, Elizabeth How, and Martha Carrier. Although Mather was critical of the use of spectral evidence and expressed concerns about the trials, he also believed that some people were guilty, including the people he wrote about.⁴³

In the twentieth century, historian Chadwick Hansen took a fresh look at the Salem trials and concluded that witchcraft was in fact practiced at Salem and that it worked.⁴⁴ He did not believe that anything supernatural was taking place. Rather he made the case that the witchcraft was only effective because its targets believed in its power. The victims of witchcraft were actually suffering from hysteria. In his book, Hansen argued that Bridget Bishop, Wilmont Reed, and Candy, a slave, were guilty of witchcraft.⁴⁵ He found the evidence against Sarah Good, George Burroughs, and Samuel Wardwell to be inconclusive.⁴⁶

This book lays out the case against five people, Tituba, an Indian slave, Bridget Bishop, Sarah Good, George Burroughs, and Samuel Wardwell. I do not agree with Hansen that the evidence against Good, Burroughs, or Wardwell was inconclusive and I argue why it was sufficient. I agree with Hansen and Cotton Mather that the case against Bridget Bishop was sound and that she did in fact practice witchcraft. On the other hand, I do not feel that the evidence against Wilmont Reed was conclusive, although it had some strength. Candy, the slave, may have been a witch, although it is impossible for us to say with certainty and we must face the fact that she was exonerated at her trial.⁴⁷

This book also differs from Hansen's book in that I at least consider the possibility of supernatural explanations for some of the events that happened. This book also differs from Mather's account in that, other than Bishop and Burroughs, I address the cases against different people. I also consider explanations that are not supernatural for some of the events that took place. Neither Hansen nor Mather were lawyers, as I am, and I try to focus on the evidence and how that

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applied to the legal standard of the day. Later in the book I also draw comparisons to recent history, which would have been impossible for either Mather or Hansen to do.

This book is not a complete and comprehensive look at the history of the Salem witchcraft trials. In the bibliography section the reader can find resources that will help him with more of the background. This book is an argument. It addresses the cases against Tituba, Bishop, Good, Burroughs, and Wardwell in separate chapters, laying out the evidence against each.

Tituba was the first to be accused and the first to confess.⁴⁸ She was never brought to trial and therefore the evidence was never properly weighed by a court at the time. Therefore, although we can draw conclusions, those conclusions lack the certainty that we can have with the cases against the others.

Bridget Bishop was the first person brought to trial in Salem. Unlike the others she was tried alone, on June 8, 1692, and was executed on June 10, 1692.⁴⁹

Sarah Good was one of the first persons accused, but her trial began after Bishop's.⁵⁰ She was convicted on June 30, 1692 along with Rebecca Nurse, Susannah Martin, Sarah Wildes, and Elizabeth Howe.⁵¹ All of them were executed together on July 19, 1692.⁵²

George Burroughs was part of the next group that was brought to trial. Along with George Jacobs Sr., Martha Carrier, John Willard, John Proctor and Elizabeth Proctor, he was convicted of witchcraft on August 5, 1692.⁵³ He was hanged, on August 19, 1692, with the others, minus Elizabeth Proctor who was granted a temporary reprieve because she was pregnant.⁵⁴ She would later have her sentenced reversed.⁵⁵

Finally, Samuel Wardwell was convicted on September 17, 1692, along with Margaret Scott, Wilmott Redd, Mary Parker, Abigail Faulkner, Rebecca Earnes, Mary Lacy, Ann Foster, and Abigail Hobbs.⁵⁶ In September of that year there were two witchcraft trials that occurred. On September 9, 1692, Martha Corey, Mary Easty, Alice Parker, Ann Pudeator, Dorcas Hoar and Mary Bradbury were also found guilty.⁵⁷ Fifteen people had been found guilty and were condemned that September. But on September 22, only eight of them, including Samuel Wardwell, were executed.⁵⁸ Rebecca Eames, Mary Lacey, Sr., Ann Foster, Abigail Hobbs, and Dorcas Hoar received

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reprieves, due to the fact that they confessed and cooperated.⁵⁹ Abigail Faulkner received a reprieve because she was pregnant.⁶⁰ Mary Bradbury escaped from the jail.⁶¹ There were no executions for witchcraft in New England after September 22, 1692.

This book will not go through the cases of all the people convicted of witchcraft at Salem, much less accused of it, but will instead consider the evidence against the five people for whom the cases appear to be the strongest. This does not mean, however, that everyone else not discussed was innocent. But it attempts to show that at least four of the twenty people executed for witchcraft at Salem were very likely guilty.

I have attempted to place these chapters in a chronological order, starting with the first person accused, who was not tried or executed, and then going through the people in the order that they were tried and executed.

It is for the reader to consider whether or not the judgment of history, that only innocent people were executed for witchcraft at Salem, is sound. I submit that that view is wrong.

CHAPTER 1

Tituba – Repentant Witch of Salem

There have been reports that Governor Sarah Palin, the unsuccessful Republican Vice-Presidential Nominee in 2008, while running for governor of Alaska, received a blessing from an African witch hunter.⁶² The gentleman, who is an evangelical Christian, was working with other evangelical Christians in America, and had bragged about his involvement in chasing a witch out of a village in Africa.⁶³

Most today live in the mental-rational world. Many are in the post-Christian world and do not give serious consideration to claims of divine action. We are far less willing to give any serious consideration to the claims of Satanic action. But, not only in Africa, but in the minds of many Americans, there is a real battle between good and evil.⁶⁴ Opening ourselves up to that understanding is the first step towards gaining a more well-rounded picture of the Salem witch trials.

In addition to changing our way of thinking about the universe to better understand the trials, we must also change our understanding of who the people of colonial New England were. We have certain generalizations about how people in the past must have thought. One of those assumptions is that the farther one goes back in time the more racist the people were. We are less racist today than people were 50 years ago. The people who lived 50 years ago were less racist than the people who lived 50 years before them. And so on. Humanity advances and learns as it goes along.⁶⁵ By this logic, the people of 1692, New England, would have to be extremely racist. We shall explore that thought as well.

Tituba was a slave in the house of the Reverend Samuel Parris of Salem Village.⁶⁶ Her racial origins are not known for certain. It was reported at the time that she was an Indian.⁶⁷ However, for years many

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thought that she might have been a black African or of mixed African and Indian ancestry.⁶⁸ Historian Eliane G. Breslaw in her book *Tituba, Reluctant Witch of Salem* made the case that she was an Indian, likely of the Arawak tribe of South America.⁶⁹ Tituba was in Barbados when Parris purchased her as a slave.⁷⁰ At some point in early 1692, Parris's young daughter and her cousin, who also lived in the house in Salem Village, suffered from something. A doctor diagnosed them as victims of witchcraft and allegations were made against Tituba.⁷¹ Tituba confessed to witchcraft.⁷² Looking at previous episodes of witchcraft in New England that should have been the end of it. Tituba, one would expect, would have been given a trial and then would have been hanged. It should have ended there.⁷³ Yet, somehow Tituba managed to survive and she was eventually released.⁷⁴ This is not the outcome that one would have expected before the Salem trials, nor is it the outcome that most people today think would have happened.

The people of colonial Massachusetts deserve credit for not hanging this woman and for listening to what she had to say. They also deserve credit as well for accepting her apology for hurting the children. It is in many ways astounding.

In 1688 another woman who was part of a distrusted ethnic group also faced an allegation of witchcraft, also confessed, and yet was executed. This also happened in Massachusetts, in Boston. Cotton Mather wrote of his involvement in this incident.⁷⁵ He reported that an elderly woman named Goody Glover had a daughter who had been a washerwoman for the Goodwin family.⁷⁶ The daughter had been accused of stealing from the family, although it is not known what become of this charge.⁷⁷ The four Goodwin children suffered from some sort of a condition after this and witchcraft was blamed.⁷⁸ The family initially responded with prayer.⁷⁹ This helped one of the four children, but the other three continued to suffer.⁸⁰

At some point the authorities become involved and the father suggested Goody Glover as a possible suspect.⁸¹ She already had a reputation as a scandalous individual.⁸² Glover confessed to the crime.⁸³ Although Glover understood English, she felt more comfortable speaking Irish Gaelic.⁸⁴ At her trial there were two translators.⁸⁵ Glover admitted her guilt.⁸⁶ Her home was searched and in it the authorities found "several small Images, or Puppets, or Babies, made of Raggs, and stuff't with Goat's hair, and other such

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Ingredients.”⁸⁷ Glover admitted to using these items to torment her victims.⁸⁸

Doctors were called to observe Glover to try to judge her mental state. The Puritans realized that a mentally unstable person could give a false confession and they wanted to avoid prosecuting someone for a crime for which he or she was not truly guilty. They were civilized men with a strong sense of justice. The doctors could find nothing mentally wrong with Glover.⁸⁹ She was convicted on the basis of her conviction, the physical evidence, and the afflicted state of the Glover children.⁹⁰

Even after her conviction, Mather still worked with Glover to try to get her to turn from Satan.⁹¹ She told him that at least one other person was involved in the Satanic plot with her and named that person, but Mather did not reveal who that person was.⁹² Glover was in the service of Satan and therefore, although her testimony could be trusted against herself, it was not trusted as evidence against others.⁹³ Talking to her through her translator, he pleaded with her to renounce Satan.⁹⁴ Glover, who was a Roman Catholic, expressed no interest in doing this.⁹⁵ Either way she was going to be executed. Perhaps she worried that she was already damned to Hell and she didn't want to anger her master. Glover was hanged. The children still complained that they were afflicted by the spirits of other witches.⁹⁶ Mather did not reveal the names of the other people suspected because he did not want an innocent person to be harmed by a serious charge when there was not enough evidence to support the accusation.⁹⁷ After some time the children were healed of their afflictions and there were no more trials involving other people accused of bewitching them.

To the average citizen of New England it must have looked like a clear-cut case. Perhaps because she felt abused or powerless or wanted revenge for the treatment of her daughter, Glover responded with traditional folk magic for revenge. Either accidentally or intentionally she may have opened the door to Satan and formed a pact with him. They wanted to save her soul, but she had to die for her crimes. They also wanted to make sure that there were not any witch-hunts. They were conservative people. They realized that there was a danger to the peace of the community in a zealous search for suspected witches.

Yet something changed in Salem in 1692. Tituba should have

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been executed, just as Glover was. Why Glover was so promptly executed while Tituba was eventually set free is a mystery that no one has been able to offer a complete answer for. When one considers the Biblical injunction against allowing witches to live⁹⁸, the animosity and fear of darker skinned people at the time⁹⁹, and the prior historical precedent, it is amazing that Tituba survived while so many others were executed.

The Reverend Parris, like the Goodwin father, first tried the traditional cures of prayer and fasting after his daughter and her cousin were diagnosed with witchcraft, but it was to no avail.¹⁰⁰ Parris's daughter, Betty Parris, aged nine, and her cousin, Abigail Williams, aged 11, continued to suffer. In addition to the apparent afflictions of these two girls, two other young women, Ann Putnam, Jr., who was twelve and Elizabeth Hubbard, who was probably around seventeen, also started to suffer.¹⁰¹

A neighbor, Mary Sibley, made an attempt to find out who was afflicting the girls by means of a "witch cake."¹⁰² With the help of Tituba and her husband, John, Mary Sibley prepared this cake using the urine of the afflicted girls, in the hopes that a dog would eat this cake and then would identify the alleged witch causing the harm.¹⁰³ This so-called white magic had its roots in English folk magic and there is no reason to think that Tituba instigated it.¹⁰⁴ Parris was outraged by this attempt to use occult means to fight the Devil.¹⁰⁵

However, shortly thereafter at least one of the young women named Tituba as well as two other local women, Sarah Osborne and Sarah Good, as being the cause of their affliction.¹⁰⁶ Tituba, for reasons that have been debated, confessed and apologized.¹⁰⁷ Osborne denied any involvement.¹⁰⁸ Good denied involvement as well, but also stated that Osborne might be a witch.¹⁰⁹ Good would eventually stand trial, be convicted, and was executed on July 19.¹¹⁰ Osborne died in prison before she was held to account.¹¹¹

There are stories that the children at the center of this episode had been involved in fortune telling and other magical games.¹¹² Some historians have suggested that perhaps the girls felt guilty about these games and that played a part in their allegations.¹¹³ The idea that the games opened the door to Satan is not taken seriously. It has become part of the tradition to suggest that maybe Tituba was involved in teaching the children fortune telling, telling them about voodoo, and

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generally teaching them about the black arts.¹¹⁴ However, there is no testimony from the trial transcripts that this happened. Folk magic and fear of witchcraft had already been a part of the English culture and there was no need for the children to borrow any of the ideas about the black arts from Tituba in order to understand it.¹¹⁵ However, the fact that the African and Indian cultures had understandings of magic, voodoo, and the black arts that were not too dissimilar from the English view is evidence of the universality and even truth of the reality of witchcraft.¹¹⁶

Of course, this opens up the next question of why the children picked Tituba as one of their attackers. One could argue that it was the communal fear of dark-skinned people who were often associated with the devil, in general, and the fear of Indians as a result of fierce wars with them, in particular. Tituba, just by being an Indian, may have provoked the imaginations of these children. When mixed in with their interest in English folk magic and conservative Puritan condemnation of these activities, her mere presence may have been enough to send these young people over the edge.

That explanation, however, requires the belief that these children were able to keep this fantasy alive in their minds for several months. Even after so many deaths they continued in their delusion. Perhaps they were all hysterics and could not control themselves. Not impossible, but perhaps not probable.

Another explanation is that the children simply lied about Tituba. However, this is even harder to believe. It requires us to accept that several young people were involved and continued to be involved in a rather complex conspiracy to murder people whom they had never met. This is not impossible either.

Perhaps it started out innocently enough without them fully realizing the consequences. However, once they realized the seriousness of their actions they may have been afraid to stop. Others, either hysterics and/or liars, also joined them, for reasons unknown, and continued to tell false stories about their neighbors.

However, are we not allowed to consider another explanation? That Tituba really was a witch. This should not seem so strange. She did confess to it.

Tituba's confession has been a matter of debate. It had been asserted that Samuel Parris beat her into confessing.¹¹⁷ At some point

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the authorities had Tituba examined for evidence of a witch's mark, a strange feature on the body that was a sign that the person had a covenant with Satan.¹¹⁸ It was reported that such a mark was found on Tituba, but it has been asserted that this was simply a scar from a beating, either from Parris or a previous master.¹¹⁹ However, it seems unlikely that these women would not have been able to tell the difference. And other people who likely had not been assaulted also had witch's marks.¹²⁰

It is claimed that because Tituba had been assaulted by Parris that any statement she made must have been invalid.¹²¹ While this does cast some doubt on the validity of the confession, it does not mean that it is of no value. Tituba was not being assaulted while she was giving her statement and she would have had many opportunities to recant while outside the presence of Parris.

One of the myths about Salem is that torture was used.¹²² Convicted witch John Proctor, in his letter to the Boston clergy, stated that some of the young men who testified had denied the witchcraft claims until they were tied up "neck and heels till the blood was ready to come out of their noses."¹²³ He also complained that the same thing was done to his son and that this would have continued for some time had not "one more merciful than the rest" taken pity on him and released him.¹²⁴ He argued that these actions were "very much like the Popish cruelties."¹²⁵ This was not a fair comparison and Proctor must have surely known that.¹²⁶ And there is no evidence that these techniques were widespread in Salem (indeed most witnesses came forward freely) or that anything more severe was used.¹²⁷ Proctor surely would not have been shy about making more serious allegations about torture if he had any hint that something more severe was taking place.

It is worth nothing that Proctor beat his own servant when she started to make witchcraft accusations and act as though she was bewitched.¹²⁸ After this she temporarily stopped making those accusations, but then continued in her fits and accused Proctor or being a witch.¹²⁹ Proctor apparently felt that it was okay to use physical punishment to get his servant to say what he wanted her to say, but it was not acceptable for the authorities to use less extreme physical duress to get these young men to confess. Proctor was not offended by the "torture", but rather what it produced. Happily he

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used force to extract statements that he agreed with. To Proctor the ends justified the means.

It is also worth noting that these techniques, if used, were not much different than the enhanced interrogation techniques used by the Bush administration.¹³⁰ We all know that the United States does not torture.¹³¹ Torture is illegal and anyone who authorized torture, including President Bush and Vice President Cheney, could be prosecuted.¹³² If a death resulted from torture they might even face the death penalty.¹³³ Therefore, we can rest assured that these tactics, whether used by the United States in the twenty-first century or used by the Salem witch prosecutors, were not torture.

The complaints of enhanced interrogation techniques were overblown. Proctor compared these actions to cruelties done in Roman Catholic countries, but that was hardly fair and he knew it. There was no pulling out of fingernails, use of hot irons, or any of the other techniques that were used in less civilized parts of the world.¹³⁴ There is nothing to suggest that dunking, or the water test, were used in Salem.¹³⁵ The procedure, which could be a primitive version of water-boarding and thus not torture, might have helped the authorities to determine who was a witch, but they did not use it.¹³⁶

Because some false statements may have been elicited under some form of duress, it seems probable that innocent people were wrongly implicated. But remember that most people gave evidence of their own free will. The people knew witchcraft was real, few if any doubted that it had some power, and they were concerned enough about it to come forward and to offer testimony that would remove the witches from the land.

All of this talk of torture is a bit off topic as there is no evidence that Tituba was tortured or subjected to enhanced interrogation techniques. If she was assaulted by Parris it was likely because he was angry at her for bringing witchcraft into his house. It would have made no sense for Parris to have tortured his slave into a false confession of witchcraft. He would have lost a slave, free labor that was not cheaply or easily replaced. Instead, it seems more likely that after the children started to suffer and didn't improve he questioned the members of his house. Tituba told Parris about her activities, perhaps not initially realizing the seriousness of her actions in Puritan culture, and he responded by disciplining her and then turning her

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over to the secular authorities. They then asked her what happened and she hesitated at first and then told them the truth and apologized because she was sorry and hoped that they would go easier on her.

Tituba's confession is a bit strange and most have simply dismissed it out of hand. On March 1, 1692 she was questioned by the local investigators. Two transcripts, which are similar, survive. One of the transcripts is longer and more detailed than the other.¹³⁷ Tituba was questioned at least three more times after this in the coming days. The transcript of the second examination also survives. Harthorne and Corwin, the witch investigators conducting the investigation, report that Tituba was consistent in her testimony on the different days.¹³⁸

From her March 1, 1692 testimony we can find out the following.¹³⁹ It was reported that at first Tituba denied having any knowledge of dealings with an evil spirit. After being asked why she harmed the children involved, she denied that she had harmed them. But when asked again she confirmed that a man had come to her and asked her to serve him. She later said at another examination that at first he claimed to be God. She suspected that this was not the case. She claims that the man, who she believed to be the Devil, threatened her if she did not serve him by hurting the children. The man had a yellow bird with him and promised her "more pretty things" if she would serve him. The man also showed her rats, a red and a black one, who requested that she serve the man. She stated that four other women would sometimes come and hurt the children. She named Sarah Osborn and Sarah Good, two local women, as being involved in the spiritual assaults. She spoke about traveling to Boston and to other places. This was accomplished by riding "upon stickes." This happened instantly so there was no travel time. They appeared around the children and she was coerced into pinching or otherwise hurting them. At the end of her examination she complained that she has gone blind, which was temporary.

The fanciful nature of her testimony has caused most scholars to doubt Tituba's claims. They could sound like the desperate and bizarre claims of a woman who is very much worried about her future and personal safety. The issue of her attacks on the children has to be addressed. Why does Satan need this woman to attack these children? And why does Satan make Tituba visible to the children? Why does

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Satan only bother to have her pinch the children? Why doesn't he demand a more serious attack? Tituba claims that they wanted her to cut off the head of Anne Putnam Jr., but this was never done and Tituba was not hurt for refusing to do it. And isn't it convenient that Tituba travels instantaneously so no one can question whether or not she knew the routes to the places that she claimed to visit?

Saying that Goody Glover manipulated images to try to hurt people or used folk magic to attempt to settle grudges is one thing. It is quite another to believe that Tituba was telling the truth and that she was involved in a literal pact with a real Satanic force. But this argument exposes the fundamental problem with our western mental-rational outlook.

Tituba was likely an Indian who had some experiences with African culture as she lived in Barbados where there were many African slaves.¹⁴⁰ The way that she looked at the world would have been radically different from how we, or even the Puritans, viewed it. We tend to think that there is only one reality and that everything else is fantasy. However, for many so-called primitive peoples there is no difference between reality and fantasy. All are reality, just different aspects of it. Tituba would have come from a culture that used natural psychedelic drugs on a regular basis to enhance spiritual experiences. Her view of reality would have depended upon her mind state. Also, in her culture witches and witch doctors would not have been unusual, and experiences with the supernatural world that were not expressly Christian would not have been written off as either Satanic or crazy.¹⁴¹ If she had any contact with Africans while in Barbados, as she likely did, she would have found that their spirituality was similar and parts of it were borrowed from her culture.¹⁴²

One of the popular theories about the Salem witch episode is that the rye supply had been infected with ergot, a compound that LSD is made of.¹⁴³ Because of this, many of the people in Salem were experiencing psychedelic incidents which they didn't understand. They did understand witchcraft though, and therefore they described their 'trips' as satanic possession and spiritual assault. Many historians have found arguments to discredit this theory, and yet it still persists.¹⁴⁴ The fact of the matter is that we will never know for sure if ergot infection was a problem or if it affected Tituba. Even if ergot was not the cause, it is possible that Tituba, being an Indian,

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searched for local naturally occurring psychedelics so she could experience the spiritual comforts of home. There is no evidence of this, critics will claim. However, her testimony sounds more like part of a psychedelic experience than anything else. Her ability to travel instantaneously, be invisible, and her conversations with spiritual creatures and other witches seem to fit with that possibility.

It will be argued that if Tituba's testimony was about a psychedelic trip then it should be completely discounted. To Tituba, however, these experiences would have been as real as her 'real life' experiences. There would have been a seamless transition for her between worlds and both would have been equally real. She may not have even thought that there was a difference. Does this mean that we should dismiss her testimony because it may have been the result of a psychedelic adventure? No. To do so would be to reflect a cultural bias that our western rational view of the world, that there is one reality and then fantasy, is correct. But there is not one reality. There are many different realities.¹⁴⁵ Tituba's testimony, if it was the result of psychedelics, was not artificial. The drugs allowed her to open up her mind to new realities that had been hidden.

If one must persist in accepting the notion that psychedelic experiences are not real, it is worth considering the argument that psychedelic experiences are influenced by so-called real life experiences. Tituba may have been involved in folk magic and spell sharing with Sarah Osborn and Sarah Good. Perhaps they were seen by the young women of the Parris house. There is no other reason why Tituba and the young women would have provided the authorities with their names. That may have explained why they appeared in Tituba's so-called visions. Perhaps it was hearing from Puritans about Satan and how some of them believed that he was behind even the innocent use of folk magic that caused Tituba to see him as well in her visions. So witchcraft may have existed on a smaller scale, but under the influence of drugs these experiences were compounded in her mind into something more sinister and far reaching.

Still this would require the coincidence that the children of Salem were acting out and complaining of spiritual attacks around the same time that Tituba, and perhaps others, were taking psychedelic drugs and being tempted to engage spiritual attacks on those same children. The better explanation is that Tituba was taking those drugs, that

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those drugs opened up an alternative reality, and that a malicious force was part of that reality and forced her to take part in attacks against innocent children. This is a big leap for modern people, but it should not be.

In regards to the questions posed earlier about why the Devil didn't change or hide the identity of Tituba and the others, one must remember the argument addressed above that the Devil can only operate with the authority that is given to him by God. God does not give him a completely free reign and the Devil gives his witches even less power. God may have protected the children from more serious attacks. Because the Devil is evil he may not have allowed his witches to hide their identities, or perhaps God didn't allow it. We don't know all of the answers. It may be useful to fall back on the old saying that God works in mysterious ways. So does Satan.

It is also interesting that Tituba recounted being present herself and engaging in attacks on the children. It was not clear to the Puritans if the specters attacking the children were being controlled directly by Satan or by the person herself.¹⁴⁶ In this case it appears that Tituba had control of her image.¹⁴⁷ However, many argued that Satan could use the image of another. It was thought that this could be done if the person agreed to serve Satan. It was also thought that Satan could use the image of an innocent person to torment others, but this view was not held by all.¹⁴⁸

Tituba was eventually released after the witchcraft trials ended.¹⁴⁹ There is no solid record of what happened to her after that.¹⁵⁰ There is one account of Tituba recanting her previous statements, however this is not from a reliable source.¹⁵¹ What we do know is that she appears to have given voluntary statements on more than one occasion that implicated herself and others in witchcraft. The children of the Parris house also implicated her and those same other people in witchcraft. Many of the facts surrounding Tituba have been lost to history. There is much myth and speculation about the role that she played in this affair, but to discount her testimony without giving it fair consideration seems unwise and unfair. We may never know what exactly happened, but Tituba's confession, as unbelievable as it may sound to us, made sense to the investigators, judges, and jurors at Salem. And it likely made perfect sense to her. In her mind it was all true, and perhaps it really was.

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We should not reject her testimony as impossible. We are not infallible in our judgments. The judges and jurors in Salem were convinced of the reality of witchcraft. They believed in its reality and power with the same level of certainty that modern men have when they deny its existence and power. Yet, is there any reason why we should be more convinced in the truth of our beliefs over theirs? Can we really say with any authority that their reality was not true?

The people of Salem put aside their preconceived ideas about race and looked at Tituba as a human being, not as an Indian. They listened carefully to what she told them. They considered what she said. They judged her credibility and they believed her. What other explanation could there be other than that they honestly accepted her statements and were terrified? They also seemed to accept her apology and appreciated her efforts to root out other witches. The people of Salem should be saluted for their fair treatment of this woman.

So why was Tituba spared while Goody Glover hanged? Tituba did express contrition for her actions and in a strongly Christian community like Salem that did earn her much credit. She also provided useful information about others who were involved in the Satanic plot and perhaps there was the hope that she would identify more people as being involved in the future. It is important to note that while Tituba was not hanged, during the witchcraft trials she was held in jail and remained uncertain about her fate. There was no guarantee that she would not eventually face trial and execution, but there was certainly no rush. And the historical documents give no impression that there was ever a desire in the community to hang her or the other confessors. Why exactly that dynamic changed is open for debate.

CHAPTER 2

Bridget Bishop – the Old Hag of Salem Town

The typical account of Bridget Bishop goes something like this: She was a young woman from Salem Village who ran an illegal tavern. She was sexy, wore sexy red outfits, and good Puritan men feared her because her lusty spirit sometimes appeared in their bedrooms to seduce them into doing impure things. The Puritans had to hang (or burn) her because she was tempting the morals of the good Puritan men.¹⁵²

This account is, of course, complete bullshit. The first thing to understand about the Puritans is that they were Puritans, not fags.¹⁵³ They didn't have a serious problem with sex or sexual temptation.¹⁵⁴ They wanted men and women to have sex (preferably within marriage) and to enjoy it.¹⁵⁵ They didn't hang Bishop because she was sexy.

The second thing to realize is that the Puritans weren't like our modern "Puritans" when it came to alcohol.¹⁵⁶ They enjoyed alcohol and it was usually safer to drink than water. They did not encourage people to get drunk, but they were not opposed to people running taverns. Bishop was not killed for running a tavern.

Bridget Bishop was not sexy (or at least not when she was arrested) and she did not run a tavern.¹⁵⁷ The problem was that Bishop was apparently misidentified by one of her accusers, and some have continued with this mistake.¹⁵⁸ She is confused with Sarah Bishop whose husband may have run some sort of a tavern. I have read other modern accounts of Bridget Bishop that get these two women confused. But those historians were simply sloppy.¹⁵⁹

Bridget Bishop was a resident of Salem Town, not Salem Village, where the allegations started.¹⁶⁰ Many people get Salem Town (now Salem) and Salem Village (now renamed Danvers) confused, just

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as people confuse the Puritans and the Pilgrims, as well as burning and hanging.

By all serious accounts, Bishop was not a young woman at the time of her trial. She would have been about 60 years old at the time of her death.¹⁶¹ When one considers the harshness of life at that time and place it is likely that she looked much older than what most women today in their sixties look like. Men were not tempted sexually by her. She did wear red outfits,¹⁶² but there was nothing particularly unusual about women at the time wearing colors other than black or gray, despite the popular perception.¹⁶³ When her spirit or image showed up in men's rooms, as was alleged, she appeared as an old hag and was more threatening than attractive.

Related to this, as supportive as I am of the notion that Bishop was involved with witchcraft in some form, there are some allegations that can likely be dismissed as honest mistakes. These involve the allegations that she or her spirit or specter showed up in the bedrooms of men.

Samuel Grey, a man in his forties who, like most accusers, had not been accused of witchcraft himself, had not known Bishop before, and who had nothing to gain from a conviction, testified that about fourteen years prior he was sleeping when he was "awakened & looking up, saw the house light as if a candle or candles were lighted in it and the dore locked & that little fire there, was Raked up he did then see a woman standing between the Cradle in the Roome and the Bed side and seemed to look upon him soe he did Rise up in his bed and it vanished or disappeared . . ." ¹⁶⁴

John Louder, also a man not accused of witchcraft, reported a similar nighttime visit from Bishop. He reported that "her likeness" was "sitting upon my stomake and putting my Armes off of the bed to free myselfe from that great oppression she presently layd hold of my throat and allmost Choked mee and I had noe strenth or power in my hands to resist or help my selfe. . ." ¹⁶⁵

John Cook, an 18 year old, who also had not been accused and who had no apparent motive to lie about this incident, said that he woke up one morning five or six years prior and saw Bishop standing in his room. She hit him on his head and then left by going through a small crack in his window.¹⁶⁶

Richard Coman, a gentleman who also had not been accused

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and who had nothing to gain by lying, told of a similar incident. He reported that eight years before the spectre of Bridget Bishop and two other women came into his room. He testified that Bishop “lay upon my Brest or body and soe oppressed him that he could not speake nor stur noe not soe much as to awake his wife althow he Endeavored much soe to do itt...”¹⁶⁷

William Stacy, another man who lived in Salem Town and who had nothing apparent to gain from lying, also told a similar story about Bishop. Stacy, as we shall see, also had additional evidence to offer against her.¹⁶⁸

I am sympathetic to these men and have little doubt that they were telling the truth, but science and personal experience lead me to think there could be an explanation for these accounts that doesn't involve witchcraft.

There is a condition known as sleep paralysis.¹⁶⁹ One's body is usually unable to move when one is dreaming. This is a good thing as it keeps you from hurting yourself or others. However, it is possible to partially wake up when in this state and to be in a world that is somewhere between dreams and what is typically considered to be reality. Many people have given accounts of lying in bed after waking up and being attacked by a ghost, aliens, demons, or a witch. Often the witch or demon will attack one's throat or sit on one's chest and make it difficult for the victim to breath. The victim is helpless to do anything. It is not unusual to sometimes see a bright light and/or to hear threatening sounds during this experience. Many report these experiences during times of high stress. As frightening as this can be, science tells us that it is not supernatural.¹⁷⁰

I experienced this at a time when I felt very stressed by my job as a prosecutor in Baltimore City.¹⁷¹ I woke up early one morning and I couldn't move. Next to me I heard growling that sounded extremely threatening. At first I thought it was my cat, which I thought unusual as the beast isn't typically aggressive. I soon realized that I was experiencing a waking dream. Even though I knew what was happening, I was terrified that I was going to be attacked by a ghost or an old hag who would possibly prevent me from breathing. I tried and tried to move but I couldn't. I eventually was able to get some control over my thoughts and avoided any more unpleasant experiences.

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Still, every time I think back on the incident I am terrified that it will happen again.

Of course, it is possible that Bishop was using occult means to attack these men in another dimension. It is possible that the visions one sees in sleep paralysis are real. However, in this chapter it is not necessary to speculate about such questions in order to make a convincing case that Bishop was a witch.

The accounts of the night attacks, even if not taken as literally true, still offer some indication that Bishop was a witch, however. In these waking dreams people typically imagine something that is frightening to them. Today it is not uncommon for people to have space alien experiences and they tend to see the typical small gray aliens in their rooms. Others will see the ghosts of people they knew in life and if the relationship was not good then the ghost will be hostile toward them. In the Middle Ages it was more common for people to imagine demons attacking them. The mind tends to create what it is most afraid of.¹⁷² The fact that these men reported seeing Bishop in their visions may indicate that some of them had previously associated her with witchcraft. This is not true of Samuel Grey as he reported that he had not known Bishop at the time, but later identified her as the attacker at her trial. Louder, however, had known Bishop and had the dream shortly after a dispute with her. Richard Coman had known Bishop as well, but there is no account of a dispute between the two. William Stacy had known Bishop and she had told him that people in the town thought that she was a witch. Cook apparently knew her as well. It is possible that Stacy, Cook, Louder, and Coman's minds drew up the images of Bishop due to her reputation in the community as a witch.

This brings us to the next interesting fact about Bridget Bishop. She had been charged with witchcraft once before. Defending people charged with crimes, I have found that at sentencing, some prosecutors will list the defendant's previous "contacts" with the criminal justice system. The "contacts" are charges that did not result in conviction, usually because the government dropped the charges. I object and the judge overrules me. When I get a chance to speak, I give a lecture on the presumption of innocence, and then am typically ignored. The State will then go on to argue the usual "if there is smoke there is fire"

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argument. If the tactic is good enough for modern day prosecutors it can be used in this academic exercise.

In *The Wonders of the Invisible World*, Cotton Mather published “An Abstract of Mr. Perkins’s Way For the Discovery of Witches.”¹⁷³ William Perkins was a minister in the early 17th century and wrote a guide for witch prosecutions.¹⁷⁴ He was concerned with the setting of legal standards for conviction and in reading his guide it is obvious that he was concerned with not convicting innocent people. Perkins wrote, “There are Presumptions, which do not probably and conjecturally note one to be a Witch. They give occasion to Examine, yet they are no sufficient Causes of Conviction.”¹⁷⁵ He then writes, “If any man or woman be notoriously defamed for a Witch, this yields a strong Suspition. Yet the Judge ought carefully to look, that the Report be made by Men of Honesty and Credit.”¹⁷⁶ Mather quotes another minister, John Gaul,¹⁷⁷ who wrote, “There are some Tokens for the Trial of Witches, more probable, and yet not so certain as to afford Conviction. Such are strong and long suspicion.”¹⁷⁸ So while it is not enough for a conviction, a prior reputation for, or accusation of witchcraft is enough to arouse suspicion and justify an investigation.

In 1680, Bishop was charged with witchcraft. Although no transcripts exist of her trial, we do know that a black slave named Wonn offered evidence against her.¹⁷⁹ He testified about seeing her specter, about her apparently bewitching horses, and he believed that her specter attacked him after he saw a mysterious black cat.¹⁸⁰ There is no record of other testimony and Bishop was not convicted (if she had been convicted she would have been hanged then), but it was not every day that one was accused of witchcraft and therefore, it does increase the suspicion, even if only slightly, that she was a witch.

Bishop’s name did not originally come up in the 1692 investigation. She would likely have been unknown to the initial group of accusers.¹⁸¹ But her name quickly surfaced as a possible suspect. We do not know how her name came to the attention of the authorities.

On the 19th of April, 1692 Bishop was brought in for questioning before the magistrates of Salem Village.¹⁸² Two transcripts of her examination exist. At her examination, the victims Mary Walcott, Mercy Lewis, Abigail Williams, Elizabeth Hubbard and Ann Putnam Jr. were all present and reported being attacked by Bishop’s specter. Bishop was indicted not for previous allegations of witchcraft, but

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for the tormenting of these young ladies on April 19, 1692. The indictments read that she “Tortured Afflicted Pined, Consumed, wasted: & tormented” these people on the date of her examination.¹⁸³ At least one person at the time argued that the indictments themselves were flawed as the young women were not physically tortured, afflicted, pined, consumed, or wasted by the specters. However, no one can doubt that they were tormented and the court, when questioned about this, found a legal justification for its actions.¹⁸⁴ Their suffering was obvious and compelling to the court, so much so that the judges were prepared to kill people because of it. And the court knew that if nothing were done the victims could suffer more and die.¹⁸⁵

During her exam, Bishop denied ever seeing the victims before.¹⁸⁶ Far from being exculpatory, this statement means that there was no bad blood between Bishop and these young women so they would have no reason to lie about her.

Bishop also gives other damning statements. She claims “I know not what a Witch is.”¹⁸⁷ This is hard to believe. She had been previously charged with witchcraft. And she lived in 17th century New England where there had been previous allegations and occasional executions of others for witchcraft. Bishop here is simply being defiant and dishonest with the court. She knew damn well what a witch was.

One of the magistrates responded to this absurd claim with a witty and lawyerly question “How do you know then that you are not a witch?”¹⁸⁸ Bishop didn’t know how to respond. She said, “I do not know what you say.”¹⁸⁹ The judge asked the question again and she responded with a threat saying “I am clear: if I were any such person you should know it.”¹⁹⁰ She was saying that if she had the powers of a witch she would have used them against the judge. However, as discussed previously, witches only have the power given to them by the Devil and his power is only what God will allow him to have. This is why the judge responded by saying, “You may threaten, but you can do no more than you are permitted.”¹⁹¹ The judge knew that her powers were limited and believed that God would protect him as he was an upright Christian man doing God’s will in rooting out the witches.

When questioned if she was responsible for a death, she responded by saying “I hope, I am not guilty of murder.”¹⁹² This is an odd thing to say. Just as one would know if one was guilty of witchcraft or

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not, one would typically know if one was guilty of murder or not. Her evasive answer indicates that she may have been trying to hide something.

They then asked her whether or not she knew of anyone who had testified that day who had admitted to being a witch. She said she didn't know anything about this. Then two men, John Hutchinson and John Lewis, in open court said that they had told her previously that day that others had confessed to being witches. When questioned about this "flat lye" she responded "I did not hear them."¹⁹³

Bishop also made the statement that she was "as innocent as the child unborn," which was a rather bold claim to make.¹⁹⁴

She was asked if her coat was cut. She denied that it was. She was then presented with a witness who claimed that he had struck her specter with his sword and cut her coat. They then looked and found that her coat had been cut, although it did not look like it had been cut with a sword. The witness explained this by saying that the sword had been in its scabbard when used.¹⁹⁵ In light of her statements and the other testimony, this evidence held some sway with the judges.

Bishop certainly had no interest in confessing to her crimes as she knew that a confession was the strongest piece of evidence that there could be of witchcraft. After additional questioning, she stated, "I am not come here to say I am a witch to take away my life."¹⁹⁶ People who confessed to witchcraft were typically hanged. She had survived a previous trial by denying the fact, so it made sense for her to do so again. She did not realize that in the 1692 witch hunt the rules would be turned upside down and the confessors would usually survive while the deniers were more likely to die. Her statement that she did not go there to admit that she was a witch in order to lose her life isn't exactly the clearest denial of guilt, however. One could read into it that she might confess to witchcraft if the result were not the loss of her life. In other words, I would tell the truth, but I don't want to suffer the consequences.

The reports indicate that Bishop become very angry when the young women would respond to her alleged torments and lacked any compassion for them whatsoever. She was confronted with young women who appeared to be in great pain. Yet the transcripts reports that "Gold saith that after this examination he askt s'd Bridget Bishop

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if she were not troubled to see the afflicted persons so tormented, said Bysshop answered no, she was not Troubled for them. . . .”¹⁹⁷

Bishop was convicted of witchcraft for tormenting these young women on the day of her examination. The allegation was that either she tormented them herself or allowed the Devil to use her image and the Devil tormented them. Without more this should not have been sufficient evidence for a conviction at Salem. As discussed above, it was generally understood (although disputed by a few) that the Devil could in theory use the specter of an innocent person to afflict others. Again, this was the opinion of Cotton Mather (who believed strongly in Bridget Bishop’s guilt) although he considered it “Rare and Extraordinary” that the Devil would take the shape of an innocent person.¹⁹⁸

There was other evidence to look for, especially the “witch’s mark” or the “devil’s mark.” A strange mark alone was not seen as evidence beyond a reasonable doubt of witchcraft, but it could create a presumption of guilt. Again quoting from William Perkins, Mather reports that:

Some add this for a Presumption : If the Party suspected be found to have the Devil’s mark ; for it is commonly thought, when the Devil makes his Covenant with them, he always leaves his mark behind them, whereby he knows them for his own : — a mark whereof no evident reason in Nature can be given.¹⁹⁹

An examination of Bishop was done on June 2, 1692 by several women at the command of the court. A group of women examined Bishop and reported that:

The first three, Namely: Bishop: Nurse: procter, by dilligent search have discovered apreternathurall Excresense of flesh between the pudendum and Anus much like to Tetts & not usuall in women & much unlike to the other three that hath been search by us & that they were in all the three womenn neer the same place.²⁰⁰

However, a few hours later when Bishop, Nurse, and Proctor were examined again and that time nothing unusual was found.²⁰¹

It is hard to know what to make of this. The witch’s mark was

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not the strongest form of evidence. And the absence of one did not exonerate a person.²⁰² The fact that Bishop appeared to have a mark during one inspection, but did not during a second one, could either be attributed to error on the part of the inspectors or Satanic power.

Although interesting, the mark, or lack thereof, does not provide conclusive evidence. Nurse and Elizabeth Proctor were likely innocent people caught up in this prosecution, yet they are listed as having a mark. It is possible that the women who did the search were not accurate or misinterpreted an innocent mark. Sometimes it is possible to see things that aren't really there or to misconstrue what one is looking at. This, along with her statements and the reactions from the young women while she was being examined, does increase the level of suspicion, however.

Although it was believed at the time that no one should be convicted on spectral evidence alone, this does not mean that the evidence had no value or wasn't evidence. Still, there was concern about the evidence for a number of reasons. First, the person offering it was bewitched and thus under the control of the Devil so there was some reason to be skeptical of his or her claims.²⁰³ Second, as discussed above, although it was considered rare, it was believed by many that the Devil could use the image of an innocent person. Third, there was no independent way to verify the claims made and it was possible that the person making the claim was simply lying or deluded. Nevertheless, spectral evidence was widely considered to have some value. Although it was not sufficient for conviction, it was not irrelevant either.

The mere fact that the attack was only witnessed by the victim or victims does not mean that the evidence has no value. If you were alone and attacked by someone and you were the only witness and had no additional evidence, you would not want your account to be simply dismissed. Cases are tried every day where the only evidence is the word of one person. And people are often convicted by judges and juries who decided to believe a sole witness beyond a reasonable doubt. The judges and jurors at Salem watched the reactions from the victims and decided to believe that the victims were telling the truth about their experiences. It is easy for us today to second guess the judgments made about the credibility of the accusers. We were not

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sitting in the room watching these events transpire. The judges and jurors were and they decided to believe the accusers.

Because the Devil might be able to use the image of an innocent person, the inquiry could not justly stop there. In the case of Bridget Bishop there was more evidence than the previous allegation against her, her own statements at her examination, her alleged devil's mark, and the accusations about her specter attacking others.

William Stacy, who was about 36 years old at the time of his testimony, told of his previous encounters with Bridget Bishop. First he told of a time when he was suffering from small pox about fourteen years prior. He noted that she expressed a "great Love" for him that was "more than ordinary." He appreciated that at the time, but later looked upon it with suspicion. He then went on to recount how he did some work for her in the past and shortly after he was paid, his money disappeared from his pocket. More tellingly he told of a time where Bishop approached him on the street and asked him if his father would do some work for him. They got into a discussion where she said that people in the town "counted her a witch." He goes on to tell of how after meeting her he couldn't move his cart, despite all of his effort. The wheel got stuck in a hole, but after he left for help and later came back the hole was gone. Stacy tells of a night attack, as we discussed earlier, where Bishop was sitting at the foot of his bed wearing her typical red outfit. He later confronted Bishop about this and asked her to deny it, "if she dare." Bishop refused to deny it and went away "very angry." She then threatened Stacy. At some point after this he was going to a barn when he was picked up by an invisible force and thrown to the ground and then against a stone wall and then finally he was thrown down a bank at the end of his house. Stacy also recounted additional trouble with his cart and said that he suffered "several other of her Pranks at severall times." He also blamed Bishop for the death of his small child.²⁰⁴

Stacey was not a stereotypical accuser.²⁰⁵ He was not a little girl. He was a grown man. He was not accused of anything himself and he had no financial incentive to perjure himself. However, some have insisted that he had a vendetta against Bishop. A few years before, in 1687, his father had filed charges in Salem Town against Bridget Bishop alleging theft of some brass that he owned.²⁰⁶ It is unclear about what happened in the case. There is no record of conviction.

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However, it was still on his mind as he recounted in his testimony that Bishop “told him he was the occasion of bringing her out about the brass she stole.”²⁰⁷ Nevertheless, we have no reason to think that this man would perjure himself and risk his temporal and eternal fate because he was angry about brass that was taken five years before.

Some of the stories about Bishop’s alleged actions with Stacy could have been the result of an overactive imagination and/or hysteria, if one does not accept the view that the witches of Salem had real power given to them by the Devil. The story about the sleep disturbance can be explained by science. However, her odd behavior and statements about people in the community considering her a witch perhaps indicate that not only did she have that reputation, but sought to foster it, perhaps to use fear to get what she wanted. Because witchcraft prosecutions were so rare and convictions were rarer and because she had escaped once before, perhaps she felt safe in allowing a bit of a reputation for witchcraft to flourish. Indeed she could have received benefits from people in the community for doing acts of witchcraft for good or for evil.

A Quaker named Samuel Shattuck,²⁰⁸ aged 41, and his wife, age unknown, testified about an encounter with Bishop in the year 1680, a year when she also stood trial for witchcraft. They testified that Bishop, then Bridget Oliver (her second of three marriages) came to his house as if she were interested in buying a hog’s head. Shattuck asked very little for it, but she decided not to buy it. She came by his house often thereafter. Around this time his oldest child started to get ill and he would get sicker each time she came by. He also believed that her specter attacked his child although did not see it. He then claimed that Bishop once brought him a several pieces of lace to dye, but that they were so short that he couldn’t think of any use for them. The implication is that they were to be used in what we would refer to as voodoo dolls or what they called poppets. Like Stacy he said he lost money that was in his possession and accused Bishop with using witchcraft to get it. She may have just stolen it. And he made further allegations about Bishop bewitching his son. Shattuck said that one day a stranger came to his house and was very concerned about his sick child. The stranger advised that Shattuck had “a neighbor that lives not far off that is a witch.” Shattuck said none of his neighbors were witches. The stranger advised that the

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witch recently had a confrontation with Shattuck's wife. Shattuck then recalled a conflict between his wife and Bishop and that Bishop "went away muttering" and Shattuck's wife thought that Bishop was making threats. Shortly after this, Shattuck's child fell ill. Shattuck sent the stranger to Bishop's house and also sent along his son. It is not clear if this was the same son who was ill. Shattuck gave the stranger money to buy cider from her. The stranger also wanted to get some of Bishop's blood. They were trying magic or witchcraft themselves. There was a folk belief that if one got hold of something that belonged to someone, especially blood, one could harm or kill the person by harming whatever was taken.²⁰⁹ When they returned the boy's face was bleeding. They reported that when they reached Bishop's house she answered and the man asked for cider. Bishop said she had no cider, told him to leave, and then picked up a spade and chased them away. When she got onto her porch she saw Shattuck's son, she ran after him, and then scratched his face with the spade. She then got the boy's blood and could use that in her witchcraft. This boy then fell ill and was judged by a doctor at the time to be bewitched.²¹⁰

The testimony from Shattuck is interesting because he provides further evidence that Bishop did not deny the accusations or rumors of witchcraft, but she only responded with threats and violence, which indicates that she was more likely in league with Satan. It also shows that she may have engaged in witchcraft or sought to foster that reputation. The Christian response would have been to deny the accusations and to improve one's reputation with acts of piety and charity. The reports of children getting ill after her visits could also have been the result of plain old fashioned poisoning and less the result of more supernatural acts. The fact that she had him dye such short lace is interesting because she was never able to give an account for why she had this material or what it was used for. Of course, the skeptic would say that if she were a witch, why would she take the risk of having her voodoo doll lace dyed by someone other than herself? And why would such a lace, which would only be seen by her (she assumed) need to be dyed anyway? However, it is clear that Bishop was comfortable with something of a reputation as a witch. She had not always denied being one before she was charged and once even stated that others considered her to be a witch, and perhaps the reputation allowed her greater power in the community.

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Again she was aware of the limited prosecutions for witchcraft and of the limited success of those prosecutions and may have thought that she was safe so long as there were never two witnesses to an act of witchcraft and she never confessed. Prior to the Salem trials that had generally been the criteria for a conviction in New England.

John Louder, who was about 32 years old at the time of his testimony in 1692, also had never been accused of witchcraft and there is no reason to think that he had anything to gain from Bishop being convicted. He testified that about seven or eight years prior he had been living with John Gedney in Salem and had been having some disputes with Bishop about her fowls that had been coming into Gedney's orchard. Not long after, he suffered from a typical waking dream where a vision of Bishop sat on his chest and made it difficult for him to breathe. Bishop's image tried to choke him and he was unable to move to defend himself. The next day Louder confronted Bishop and she denied attacking him. After he pressed the point she became upset and threatened Louder. Shortly after this he was attacked by a black pig and harassed by another monster who invited him to serve the Devil. He saw Bishop shortly after this. The transcript states that "[o]n her tryall Bridget Bishop alias Oliver denied that she knew this deponent though the orchard of this depon't & the orchard of said Bishop Joined & they often had difference for some yeares together."²¹¹

If we dismiss some of the more dramatic accounts of Louder as the result of an overactive imagination and if we assume that his nightly attack is nothing more than a waking dream, we are still left two pieces of evidence. The first is the fact that she has "her fowles" that trespass onto the orchard of Louder's landlord. Many believed that witches had "familiaris:" small creatures such as cats or birds, which would assist the witch. While these things appeared to be animals, they were actually spirits.²¹² They would feed off of the witch's teat,²¹³ which could also be the witch's mark. It is hard to conceive that birds were a common pet in 17th century New England, yet Bishop appears to have had them. And amazingly enough she was able to let them go and they would apparently return to her and thus could be identified as "her fowles." Either she was a witch with Satanic powers and familiars or she kept unusual pets that would allow others to possibly draw that conclusion. Of course, it is also possible that

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these were turkeys or chickens that were raised for food. However, those animals are easily contained and do not normally threaten orchards as they cannot fly. It is more likely that she kept flying birds. Also, what is most fascinating is how she so blatantly denied that she knew this gentleman or ever lived next to him, even though the court could easily look at the land records and determine that she had lived next to him. To the court her lack of respect for the truth served as additional evidence of her guilt. And it should cause us even now to question just what kind of a person they were dealing with.

The next witnesses that should be considered are John Bly, Sr. and William Bly. John was about 57 years old and William was about 15 when they testified before the court. They said that they had previously been employed by Bridget Bishop to help take down a cellar wall in an old house that she had previously lived in. When they took down the wall they found “severall popitts made up of Raggs and hoggs Brusells w’th headless pins in Them. W’th the points out ward & this was about Seaven years Last past.”²¹⁴ John and his wife, Rebecca, also told a story about how they had purchased a pig from Bishop’s husband. Bridget Bishop was unhappy with a financial aspect of the transaction and went to the Blys to complain. Shortly thereafter the pig had strange fits, would not eat, would not nourish its young, was being destructive, and otherwise acting out of control. A home remedy from a neighbor seemed to cure the pig, but that was only temporary. Shortly thereafter it was back to being a mad pig.²¹⁵

Poppits or voodoo dolls were and are traditional items used in image magic, a form of witchcraft in many different cultures.²¹⁶ The concept is simple. The victim is injured when the witch torments his image.²¹⁷ If the person believed in the reality of witchcraft and if that person knew or believed that someone was tormenting his image, then he would likely react badly and believe that he was going to die. The stress of believing that one was being tormented by a witch has killed people.²¹⁸

Bishop could not explain the poppits to the court.²¹⁹ To the judges and jurors it was direct and damning evidence. The pig may well have been poisoned by Bishop who had been known for her violent temper. Prior to these charges, Bishop and her previous husband had both been prosecuted for fighting with each other.²²⁰ The Bly’s told of nothing fantastical and had no known reason to lie.

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There is other testimony against Bridget Bishop, but that mostly involved testimony that was about waking dreams or the testimony of other accused witches. Because other accused witches were not traditionally considered trustworthy witnesses, except, perhaps, against themselves, their accounts will not be given much weight in this chapter.²²¹ The testimony from Deliverance Hobbs and Mary Warren, two other accused witches, does not involve any encounters in our present reality, but rather more fantastical stories about Bishop and her supernatural doings.²²² The same is true of testimony from Susannah Sheldon and Elizabeth Hubbard, two victims who were bewitched and thus under the influence of the Devil.²²³ The court would have given weight to this testimony, but did not convict Bishop on this evidence alone. The evidence of the poppets and the testimony from Samuel Shattuck provided the court with enough evidence to believe that Bishop was a practicing witch.

John Cook, the young man discussed above who had the dream involving Bishop, told a story from his teenage years where an apple was thrown at his mother from his direction, but somehow managed to avoid blame by blaming an invisible Bridget Bishop.²²⁴ This story seems unbelievable, but one gets the impression from his testimony that his mother and later the court apparently believed it.²²⁵ This doesn't mean that the facts asserted were true, but the fact that they were willing to believe this story does speak of the reputation of Bridget Bishop in the community as a witch.

Other testimony applied to Sarah Bishop. Inexplicably, however, there was confusion between these two different women at the time. It is no wonder so many scholars have confused them ever since, although in light of recent findings, there is no justification for them to continue doing so.²²⁶

A jury found Bishop guilty of bewitching five young women and she was sentenced to death.²²⁷ She was convicted for bewitching the five young women who responded to her in the courtroom, not for any of her previous acts, although the jury must have taken them into consideration. Bernard Rosenthal in his book *Salem Story* wrote that:

Bridget Bishop died because the law said that she afflicted Abigail Williams, Ann Putnam, Jr., Mercy Lewis, Mary Walcott (an indictment that does not survive), and Elizabeth Hubbard...

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The only evidence in support of the claim that these five had been hurt by Bridget Bishop came from their own testimony – and that of their cohorts, who also had the gift of seeing specters – that her spirit had attacked them. Although other testimony surely influenced the judges and jurors, the court used only spectral evidence as the legal basis for convicting Bridget Bishop.²²⁸

This is not accurate. The court considered all of the evidence and that supported the claims made by the young women. There were two witnesses who testified about her possession of poppets, which were used for witchcraft. There was testimony about her having lace that could only be used with those poppets. There was also testimony that she had assaulted a young man with a knife, likely to use his blood in witchcraft ceremonies to hurt him. Although there was no confession, her words were so full of lies there was no reason to think that she was truthful in her denials.

The testimony from the afflicted girls has not been given much weight by historians. Ann Putnam, Jr. later apologized for her role in all the cases. She said she had been under the influence of the Devil and feared that through her actions innocent blood had been shed.²²⁹ However, it is also important to note that we have the benefit of that statement now. The judges and jurors did not have that. They also had live witnesses; we only have transcripts that may be incomplete. We were not in the courtroom to judge the credibility of the witnesses. Presumably the judges and jurors did not abandon all standards of right and wrong and condemn an innocent woman. They must have judged all of the witnesses and did what they thought was right. The criticism about the court not following the traditional rules for finding a person guilty of witchcraft is not completely fair. Between the lace, the poppets, and the cutting of the young man, there was enough evidence to convict her. She was not the first to be accused in the Salem witchcraft episode, but she was the first to be tried and executed, perhaps because they had the strongest case against her.

In addition, an argument could be made that to the extent that any of the traditions of the past were not followed, it does not necessarily mean that the courts did anything wrong. Although there was the advice of William Perkins and others, there was no codified law at the

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time for finding a person guilty of witchcraft. Much of the criminal law at the time was judge-made law. Courts often made it up as they went along. Today we have the rewards of their trial and error. But even today judges are presented with new situations, with new laws, and with new interpretations of old laws. Judges today do have more guidance from the past and defendants have recourse to appellate courts to correct mistakes, but the law is not static and was less so back then.²³⁰

Some historians have pointed out the fact that from the start, some religious ministers expressed concern as to how these trials were handled.²³¹ And one judge on the court, Nathaniel Saltonstall, resigned shortly after the Bishop trial perhaps because he disagreed with how the court functioned.²³² However, it does not appear that any other judge left the court.

Despite the fact that the law is a living organism that is allowed to evolve, it is understandable that many share the concerns that were raised by Saltonstall and many of the ministers over the use of spectral evidence. This issue of changing legal standards will be addressed in greater detail later. Nevertheless, it does not affect the strength of the case against Bishop as there were two strong witnesses to her witchcraft, Bly and Shattuck.

One of the problems we face in trying to make any determination is that we only have the transcripts of direct examinations that have survived. There is no evidence that Bishop had an attorney and it is unknown whether or not she had the opportunity to cross-examine her accusers. These would be fatal flaws in any case in modern America. Hearsay evidence also appears to have been allowed.²³³

Taking what we have, we have unreasonable statements and flat out lies from Bishop in her own testimony. We have testimony from William Stacy where he recounted a conversation where Bishop told him that some people in the town thought that she was a witch. Her reputation as a witch was so strong that various people had nightmares about her where she attacked them. John Cook, a teenager, was able to blame an invisible Bishop for an attack on his mother and was taken seriously. She did nothing to stop this reputation and seems to have encouraged it. She apparently kept birds, which were considered witch's familiars, as pets. There were children that seemed to get sicker and sicker with each of her visits to their houses. We have a

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pig that went mad after its owner had a quarrel with her. We know that she was an angry and combative woman who was known to make threats against her neighbors. There is evidence that she assaulted a child with a deadly weapon, likely because she wanted to use his blood in witchcraft ceremonies to hurt him. And there was testimony that what we would call voodoo dolls were found in her house and from another person we have evidence that she had a piece of lace that had no other obvious use than to be used on one of those dolls.

One does not have to accept the notion that there is a creature known as Satan that Bishop was somehow in league with in order to believe that she was involved with witchcraft. Neither does one have to accept the more fanciful tales told by some of the younger women from Salem Village to believe that Bishop was involved in the dark arts. It may have been that since some of the other evidence was so compelling that the judges and jurors decided to accept the spectral evidence as well.

Bishop, who successfully had defeated a witchcraft accusation before, thought she was safe. But she was wrong. There was enough evidence for the jurors at the time to convict. The verdict was sound.

CHAPTER 3

Sarah “No Good” Good – the Young Hag of Salem

The Salem witchcraft episode has a weird way of twisting the minds of people, even the minds of historians. While Bridget Bishop is constantly portrayed, even by self-styled experts, as an attractive young woman despite the fact that we know she was elderly, Sarah Good has been mistakenly portrayed just as consistently as an old hag despite the fact that she was reasonably young when she died.²³⁴ She was likely in her thirties when she was accused of witchcraft. She had a young child and was pregnant at the time with another one. We know this because after she was sentenced her execution had to be postponed until after she had given birth because the people of colonial New England did not want to destroy an innocent life.²³⁵

Perhaps this misunderstanding about her age comes from her behavior. While Bridget Bishop was accused of going into men’s bedrooms and wearing provocative clothing and thus seemed to act in a way more befitting a younger more sexually ambitious woman (although her clothing wasn’t really especially provocative and her nighttime guests were more concerned with her image strangling them and likely were not turned on by her), Good’s actions seem to fit more with a bitter old woman who had suffered through a hard life. Reading the accounts, one is left with the impression that Good and her husband were incapable of supporting themselves and often had to rely on the charity of others. Even when her neighbors were generous with her, Good responded with all of the vitriol that one would typically expect from an angry old woman. The image of her as this old woman became part of the collective historic unconscious and like many wrong beliefs about the Salem witch trials, it is hard to dislodge.

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Nevertheless, we must continue to assert accurate depictions of these people and the events that they were involved in as the study of these people and events should continue to be important to our understanding of our society and ourselves.

Sarah Good was more than a bitter young woman who relied on charity. In colonial New England where witchcraft accusations had been rare and where trials were rarer, the authorities required more evidence than just a general reputation for being difficult. In later trials much less was required for arrest and conviction, but when Sarah Good was first named, the excitement had not yet taken hold of the community. They didn't blindly name Sarah. She was not named because she was an angry woman. She had a reputation for more than mere bitterness. She had a reputation as a witch and once she was arrested she did everything short of confessing to confirm the community's worst fears.

As mentioned above, when the young women fell into their first fits, there was no concern with getting from them the names of their suspected attackers. The concern was with healing the children through prayer and fasting, not unlike the modern exorcisms that are performed by the Catholic Church or the deliverance ceremonies performed by some Protestants. However, when this was not successful, Samuel Parris sought to find out the names of the persons responsible. And the people named were Tituba, Sarah Osborne, and Sarah Good.

The traditional view would have been not to put too much weight on the word of the girls. They were under the influence of Satan and thus could be tricked into naming an innocent person. But after Tituba confessed and also named Good and Osborn, that increased the suspicion. Still this would not have been enough evidence to convict Good and Osborn. Tituba, as a person who was in a pact with Satan, could not be trusted to be accurate with her information. All of this evidence triggered suspicion, but was not enough to secure a conviction. It was enough to arrest and question, however.

Sarah Good was named as a suspect on February 29, 1692 and was questioned on March 1, 1692 by the magistrates.²³⁶ This is the same day that Tituba was questioned. During Good's examination, she showed her contempt for the court. She was asked simple questions at first about her familiarity with evil spirits. She denied that she

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had any. She also denied contact with the devil. They asked her why she hurt the children who were afflicted by her presence. She denied that she hurt them and condemned anyone who would. She insisted that she was falsely accused. Whether or not she was actually doing anything to harm these children, either through spiritual or psychological means, is unclear, but then the magistrates asked her about her past activities.²³⁷

Sarah Good, despite the fact that she had a husband and was not in any way disabled that we know of, was always asking for handouts from her neighbors.²³⁸ This was a typical witch activity as the witch could use personal items from the persons she wanted to afflict to assist her in casting spells.²³⁹ On one occasion she went to the house of Samuel Parris to request aid. She was apparently given something to help her child and she went away “muttering”.²⁴⁰ The judges asked Good about this and she denied muttering anything. Instead she insisted that she thanked them for what they had given her. The judges and Parris were unconvinced by this. It is highly likely that she was muttering curses, as she was prone to do. It is also possible that at least one impressionable child at the house heard her and took those curses so seriously that she became deathly afraid of Sarah Good.

This business of muttering curses after either being denied what she wanted or getting exactly what she wanted was a common theme with Sarah Good. Later in the examination they asked her again about this general pattern that she followed. They asked her what she had said after she went away from houses muttering. She claimed at first that she was merely saying the Commandments. But when she was asked what Commandments she was reciting, she was unable to name any and instead claimed that she was saying a Psalm. They asked her what Psalm she was muttering and after a “long time” she “muttered over some part of a psalm.”²⁴¹ It is shocking to think that this woman, who was living in Puritan dominated New England, could not at least name one commandment or properly recite one Psalm. To the Puritans this must have seemed as strong evidence of her rejection of Christianity and association with evil. There was no doubt in their minds that she was muttering off curses. And what must have been extremely upsetting was that she was even muttering off these curses about people, such as Parris, who had given her something. She

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was not merely an angry woman who was frustrated at not receiving charity, she was a witch who was reciting curses over property that had been charitably given to her by others.

Good even expressed her hatred for her neighbors during her exam. Although she denied hurting the children, she was not ready to absolve her fellow accused of any wrongdoing. When asked, she insisted that Sarah Osborn, who had also been arrested with her, was the real witch who had tormented the children.²⁴² Either she was in a coven with Osborn and decided to rat Osborn out to save herself, or she was simply a manipulative liar who was prepared to sacrifice the life of a person whom she did not know was guilty in order to save her own miserable life.

Good, in her examination, said that she served God, but when she was asked what god she served she said “the god that made heaven and earth” although in her answer she was “not willing to mention the word God” and “her answers were in a very wicked, spitfull manner reflecting and retorting against the authority with base and abusive words and many lies she was taken in.”²⁴³ A person who boasts of serving the Almighty God should not act in such a manner. Heretics in Christianity have sometimes rejected the material world as the work of Satan and even the God of the Old Testament as actually being the Devil.²⁴⁴ It is possible that Good subscribed to this traditional heretical position and yet also decided to worship that Devil. Therefore she could think in her mind, without contradiction, that she served the “god” who made the lower heavens and the earth, but that “god” was the Devil. Or she was just lying when she said that she served God.

Good’s own husband, William Good, condemned her at the hearing. Again keep in mind that this was early in the history of the trials and there was no reason for him to fear that he would have been prosecuted for defending his wife. No one had quite realized how the game had been changed. On his own he asserted that he was afraid of his wife and that she either was a witch or “would be one very quickly.” When asked, he could not point to any specific act that she had done to make him think thus, but instead cited her bad temper and said she was the enemy “to all good.”²⁴⁵

Sarah Good was also a racist. After the examination was over, she bragged to one of her jailers, Samuel Braybrook, that the only

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evidence against her was from an Indian and that because of this she was not worried about being convicted. She believed that Tituba was less reliable because of her dark skin and different racial background. Braybrook also reported that Good said that she would not “owne her self to bee a wicth unless she is provd one,” which is hardly an assertion of innocence, but rather a “catch me if you can” defense. Braybrook also reported that she railed against the judges and even expressed a desire to kill herself.²⁴⁶

The evidence from her neighbors was also damning and tended to show that she practiced some form of witchcraft. Samuel Abby, who was 45 years old, and his wife, Mary, who was 38, told the court that three years before they had allowed Sarah Good and her husband to stay with them. Prior to this the Goods had been homeless. Even though the Abbys had taken pity on the Goods and had given them a place to live, Sarah Good was very hostile toward them. She had a “turbulant” spirit and was so “Spitefull and so Mallitiously bent” that the Abbys couldn’t stand to live with her any more. For the sake of their sanity, the Abbys asked the Goods to leave. The Abbys had tolerated Sarah Good for six months, but could not suffer her any longer. Sarah Good was even more enraged after being asked to leave. She insulted them and their children with “vile Names” and often threatened them.²⁴⁷

The winter after Sarah had left their house, the Abbys began to lose cattle. Several cows died in a way they thought was unusual. They had a “drupeing Condition” and would not eat. The Abbys lost seventeen cows this way within two years. They reported that two cows had died within a half hour of each other. They also lost sheep and hogs, but do not say how many.²⁴⁸

When Sarah’s husband, William, informed his wife of these unusual and unfortunate events, she responded that she did not care if all of their cows died. The Abbys reported that on the very day Sarah Good was arrested, a cow that had been sick was well again.²⁴⁹

There are a few possible conclusions that can be drawn. The first is that the Abbys were lying. There is no reason to think that this is the case. The judges and jurors also would have had an opportunity to watch them as they testified and they were satisfied that the accounts were honest. There is no evidence that Sarah Good disagreed with their assessment of her or the facts that were given. From what we

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know about Good it is highly likely that she did act in the manner the Abbys described.

The second conclusion that can be drawn is that Sarah Good was a witch in a literal pact with a supernatural being called Satan and used her skills to kill the Abbys' cattle. Cows and other livestock were extremely important to the early New England people. If the farms had been unable to produce enough food the people of the community would simply die in a famine. There was no UNICEF to fly in relief. If Satan wanted to bring down New England he would do so by attacking the farms.

However, a third conclusion is that she was a witch, but did not use any supernatural powers. The Biblical injunction against suffering a witch to live is actually condemning poisoners, not literal witches. It is a mistranslation.²⁵⁰ But witches, like anyone else, can use poison. Samuel Abby likely had a good understanding of livestock. Farming was not anything new. The traditions and knowledge had been passed down for generations. He knew that his livestock were not dying for any natural reason and there is no evidence of widespread bovine diseases at the time. It seems logical that Good, a spiteful woman, simply sought revenge by feeding Abby's livestock some form a poison. Persons steeped in nature religions and witchcraft often know of local plants that could be given to cure or kill.²⁵¹ It is not hard to imagine that in the middle of a night she sneaked onto a property that she knew well and poisoned the livestock. This accounts for why the Abbys' cow was well again after Good was arrested. She had likely only just started to sneak poison into the feed of this particular cow and hadn't been able to follow up with more visits. This explains why she was not surprised or upset after being told by her husband that the Abby's cows were dying. Any citizen of the colony would have been concerned as this potentially affected everyone. Good, on the other hand, could care less about the success of the colony. Also, it may explain why Good's husband was so insistent in his allegation that she either was a witch or would soon become one. He likely either knew or suspected that she was involved in these poisonings, but perhaps didn't speak up sooner over fears that he too would be implicated in wrongdoing.

Something real happened to these cows. It has been suggested that all of the events of Salem can be explained as either fraud and/or

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hysteria. However, cows are not generally thought to have a fear of witches and they are not known for being dishonest.

If Good had only faced one allegation of poisoning cattle it would be easier to dismiss, but this appeared as a constant theme with her. Sarah Gadge, age unknown, and her husband Thomas, about 40 years old, testified that about two and a half years prior Sarah Good had gone to their house and was refused entry because Sarah Gadge was afraid that Good had been around people who had smallpox. Good responded with her usual muttering and cursing. Good then told Gadge that if Gadge would not let her into the house then Gadge ought to at least give her something. Gadge sensibly responded that she would have nothing to do with Good. If Gadge had given Good any personal item then Good could have used her witchcraft on it. The Christian people of Massachusetts believed in charity, but would not help someone if they reasonably feared it would be used against them. Good left, but the next morning one of the cows that belonged to Gadge's husband had died in a "sudden, terrible & Strange, unusuall manner" and some of the neighbors speculated that the cause was witchcraft.²⁵² Thomas Gadge testified that he and some of his neighbors had preformed an animal autopsy, or necropsy, on this cow and could not find a natural cause for its death.²⁵³

It is easy to mock the idea that this man and his neighbors performed an autopsy on his dead cow. However, this man had some hope that by opening up this cow he would be able to determine the cause of its death. He might have been able to use this information to protect the rest of his cows. It was likely not the first time that he had opened up a cow to search for a cause of death. He must have had some experience with this technique and some confidence in his ability to find out what the cause of death was. While autopsies on humans were rare at the time, there were no prohibitions on examining the remains of livestock. Gadge was a farmer, but at the time he also would have been a veterinarian and a butcher and thus would have had a good understanding of bovine health and anatomy. He and his neighbors, who were also likely farmers, felt confident with their conclusion that there was no natural cause of death. There were no injuries or obvious signs of disease. Many poisons, however, are less detectable, even to a trained observer.²⁵⁴

Henry Herrick, who was 21 years old, and Jonathan Batchelor,

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who was 14 years old, told the court about their experiences with Sarah Good and her behavior around cattle. They reported that two years prior in March, Sarah Good visited Herrick's father's house and asked to stay there for the night. Again perhaps knowing her reputation for being a difficult person and possible witch, Herrick wisely refused her and Good, as usual, went away muttering and cursing. Mr. Herrick, again wisely, instructed his son and Jonathan Batchelor to follow Good to make sure that she got off their property. He was concerned that Good might sleep in the barn and burn it down with the pipe that she was smoking. Sure enough, the two young men saw Good stop at the barn. They yelled at her to go. Good responded by saying that she would cause Herrick to lose one or two of his best cows. It is not clear from the record if this threat was ever carried out. However, Batchelor testified that about a week later two of his grandfather's cows disappeared and were replaced by two younger cows and that several of his grandfather's cows had been set lose "in a strange manner."²⁵⁵

Here you have no dramatic or fanciful stories of witchcraft and it is not even clear if Good was able to follow up on her threat to attack Herrick's cattle. If these young men wanted to lie they could have easily told a more compelling story. It is an honest story and one that meshes quite well with the other accounts of Good's behavior, except here you have her directly threatening harm against cows. Even if she did not actually harm cattle in this incident, at the very least she was causing chaos by sneaking back onto the property and opening up gates. Also, the fact that she smoked a pipe is interesting. New England Puritans would have associated tobacco with the Indians²⁵⁶ and thus with the devil. Although smoking tobacco was popular in other parts of the English speaking world it was frowned upon in Puritan New England. It was not illegal, but it was not seen as proper behavior.²⁵⁷ The fact that the two young men believed that older cows had been replaced with younger ones is likely the result of confusion. Or perhaps Good opened the gates at other farms and the wrong cows made their way back to the farm.

There was other testimony against Good that seemed to either be the result of hysteria, fraud, or possibly a literal Satanic pact. There was even testimony that related to the typical waking dream where the victim said that Good approached him while he is lying in his

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own bed.²⁵⁸ The fact that a person reported being attacked by Good in his dreams does not mean that Good was necessarily engaging in nighttime attacks. Nor does it mean that the person was lying. It is likely that he experienced these nightmares due to stress and because the person associated Good with witchcraft, due to her reputation, his mind made Good the attacker. In addition to these waking dreams and the assertions that Good's specter was attacking the victims (for which she was actually convicted) there was testimony from Good's very young daughter who told fanciful tales of her mother's alleged witchcraft.²⁵⁹ Out of fairness, I will not give this testimony from her daughter too much credibility. Small children are easily impressionable and the child may have been frightened into telling an untrue story. However, it is also possible that she was telling the truth, but we do not have to go into this realm in order to find the evidence against Good. William Good, her husband, not only said that he thought his wife may be a witch, he also said that he thought that she may have had a witch's mark.²⁶⁰ All of this testimony is interesting and tends to point toward her guilt. But alone, without the evidence of her poisonings, curses, and threats it should not be seen as anything close to sufficient to find her guilty.

There is some indication that one accuser did perjurer herself in the trial of Good. Robert Calef was a bitter enemy and libeler of Cotton Mather and an opponent to the trials, made this allegation. He wrote in his book *More Wonders of the Invisible World* of an incident where one of the afflicted (he does not name who) fell into a fit and after coming out of it claimed that she was stabbed by Good's specter. She even produced part of a knife that she claimed she had broken off during the attack. However, after she produced the knife for the court a young man stepped forward and produced the other half of the knife. The young man claimed that he had broken his knife the day before and that he threw away the tip that broke off. He claimed that the girl in question witnessed this. The judges then compared the two broken blades and found that they matched. The young woman was told to stop telling lies. She was then allowed to continue with her testimony.²⁶¹

This account, however, lacks credibility. It is not recorded in any of the court transcripts, or in any other source. It does not include the name of the young woman who was found to be a liar. Calef, perhaps,

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did not want to press his luck by defaming another person and risking a lawsuit. Also, despite the faults of the court, there is no doubt that all of the men who sat on it were dedicated public servants who truly believed that they were doing justice in each case.²⁶² It is impossible to believe that after hearing such perjury they would have allowed this girl to continue in her testimony and that they would not have been much more critical of the evidence put forward by her cohorts. There is no reason to think that this account is true. It is more likely a story that only took place in the mind of Robert Calef.

On the day of her examination for witchcraft charges, Good was convicted of tormenting several young women of Salem Village. Yet the evidence that she tormented the girls came from spectral evidence and for a variety of reasons (fraud, hysteria, and Satanic delusion) that evidence had not previously been seen as reliable. However, the court did not just watch the rantings of young women. They also listened to evidence from average people who told of Good's cursing, threats, and the non-natural deaths of cattle after disputes with Good. It is interesting to note that all of these accounts involving cattle had occurred two to three years prior. Had she stopped poisoning cows? Had she simply become more discreet about her actions? Or did she simply have bad luck and was wrongly accused? It is impossible to prove this, or any case, beyond all possible doubt. But from the testimony that we have, there was sufficient cause to believe that she was guilty. From the reasonable inferences drawn there was enough evidence to believe that she had engaged in at least two acts of poisoning, which is a form of witchcraft.²⁶³ Therefore, her conviction was fair.

Good helped to make the case against her. She was her own worst enemy. Although she claimed to serve God, her words made it clear that she was anything from a devout Christian. Even after her conviction, Good still managed to threaten people. While incarcerated, Good spotted a young servant by the name of Mercy Short, who had been running an errand to the jail. Good, as usual, wanted a handout. She asked Mercy for some tobacco. Mercy had some on her and threw some of it at Good and yelled "That's tobacco good enough for you." Good then cursed Mercy Short and Short started to suffer fits shortly thereafter. Being threatened by this witch sent the young woman

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over a mental edge. She was treated with prayer by Cotton Mather and showed some improvement over time.²⁶⁴

Good was executed on July 19, 1692 along with four other people. This was the first group to die after Bridget Bishop. While on the gallows she took the opportunity to curse at the Reverend Mr. Nicholas Noyes of Salem Town, who was one of the few ministers who supported the witch trials. She famously screamed to him “I am no more a witch than you are a wizard, and if you take away my life God will give you blood to drink.”²⁶⁵ As Hansen remarked, “it was not the sort of thing a dying Christian would say.”²⁶⁶ Jesus Christ forgave those who brutally executed him and even made excuses for them, saying that they did not know what they were doing.²⁶⁷ The Christian God does not allow cursing people, not even one’s enemies.²⁶⁸ However, the god of this world, Satan, would likely approve of these words. As to her denial, Satan being the Father of Lies, would probably not disapprove of her denial of her association with him if it advanced his cause. To the people of the community this must have been the icing on the cake of her conviction.

Many years later when the Mr. Noyes died, it was said that blood poured out of his mouth.²⁶⁹

CHAPTER 4

George Burroughs – Satan’s Man in Salem

The year was 1980. It was an especially nasty scene. Her dead naked body was wrapped in altar cloth and she was laid out on the altar in the hospital chapel. Stabbed more than thirty times. It was an odd way to go, especially for a seventy-one year old nun. But that was how Sister Margaret Ann left this world. There were strong satanic overtones to the case. She was killed on Holy Saturday, in front of the Tabernacle which held the Eucharist. Her stab wounds looked like upside down crosses, a standard satanic symbol. Her face was anointed with her own blood. The prosecutor said that it was “‘a classic textbook satanic cult killing’ - more than any case they’d ever seen.”²⁷⁰

There was an initial suspect, but it took twenty-six years and forensic evidence to convict him. He was a popular Catholic priest named Father Gerald Robinson. When the police searched his home with a warrant they found over one hundred pictures of people in coffins and literature about the occult. After his arrest, others would come forward alleging that this priest engaged in Satanic services and ritualistic sexual abuse of minors.²⁷¹

The full truth may never be known. But a jury of his peers convicted Fr. Robinson of murder and he received a lengthy prison sentence. The prosecutors did not introduce the evidence of Fr. Robinson’s occult activities. They relied on the evidence that related to the crime scene.²⁷² Was Fr. Robinson a true Satanist or had he simply killed this nun over a regular everyday dispute and then tried to cover it up by making it look like it was done by a shadowy Satanic cult? There is no clear-cut answer to this, but what we do know is that it was not the first time that a serious allegation of Devil worship was made against a cleric.

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The headline screamed “Satanism Is Practiced in the Vatican!” on the Fatima Network website.²⁷³ The conservative Roman Catholic organization²⁷⁴ dedicated to the alleged apparitions of the Virgin Mary in Portugal to a group of small children²⁷⁵ reported the shocking claims. Two churchmen had stated that Satan had entered the Vatican. Then Archbishop Emmanuel Milingo stated that Satanism was practiced within the walls of the holy city. The archbishop, who was a veteran exorcist and a high-ranking cleric, refused to name any names and offered no details that would identify anyone. Former Jesuit priest and former Vatican insider Father Malachi Martin also made claims about Satanism within the Vatican. In one of his works of fiction he wrote about a Satanic service that took place in St. Paul’s chapel in the Vatican. It was suggested that Fr. Martin’s book, *Windswept House* was only fictional in that the names of the people involved had been changed. When questioned about the archbishop’s allegation, Fr. Martin responded, “Archbishop Milingo is a good Bishop and his contention that there are satanists in Rome is completely correct. Anybody who is acquainted with the state of affairs in the Vatican in the last 35 years is well aware that the prince of darkness has had and still has his surrogates in the court of St. Peter in Rome.”²⁷⁶ These claims, however, are not usually made by mainstream Catholic officials. Milingo is now considered on the fringe. He later joined the ‘Moonies’ and was married by that group.²⁷⁷ The Cardinal eventually left his wife and returned to the Church, but he later consecrated a few married men as bishops without papal approval, which resulted in him being excommunicated.²⁷⁸ Many of these claims of Satanism may be part of a conservative overreaction to the more liberal direction that the Church has taken in recent years. However, it may be wrong to dismiss all of these allegations as such. As demonstrated earlier, there may be good reasons why one might attempt to form a Satanic pact. Religious officials are not immune from such thinking. Indeed, it is not hard to imagine that a priest might become more disillusioned with the Church, especially after he has seen firsthand some of the abuses of power.

The history of Christianity is riddled with people who would use their clerical authority for evil. The Bible and early church fathers tell of Simon Magus, a magician or sorcerer, who offered to pay money to be ordained in order to gain more magical powers. He was impressed

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by the miracles that Christ's apostles performed and wanted to do the same, not for the greater glory of God, but for his own personal gain. Simon was denied and rebuked and then continued with his previous magical practices.²⁷⁹ Had he been successful in receiving holy orders he could have abused whatever supernatural power he gained. It is not hard to conceive that there were other sorcerers who learned from this and who received holy orders, while pretending to be devout, with the intent to later abuse whatever power they might have received.

In his book *Witchcraft at Salem*, Chadwick Hansen writes that one of the abuses of the clergy in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries involved some priests cursing others by saying masses over their images.²⁸⁰ He also noted that, "Renegade members of the clergy have played a large part in the history of witchcraft both in fact and in fiction. It should be remembered that Morgan le Fay, King Arthur's sister, was supposed to have learned her evil craft in the nunnery where she was educated, that Benvenuto Cellini's sorcerer-friend was a priest, and that a renegade priest is supposed to be necessary to the performance of a Black Mass."²⁸¹ Hansen suggests that the citizens of Massachusetts would have been aware of these examples.²⁸²

The Reverend Mr. George Burroughs would not have been the first cleric to have practiced witchcraft. Certainly many, if not most or all, of the Puritans would have thought that Catholic clerics were already in league with Satan.²⁸³ Thus, they would have accepted the notion that one could pretend to be in the service of God while actually being in the service of Satan. Therefore, it was not a serious shock when Burroughs was accused of witchcraft. And in light of his reputation in the community before the witchcraft accusation outbreak, the charges made perfect sense.

While the popular opinion of George Burroughs is that he was a good man and a good Christian minister who was wrongly accused and executed in the Salem witch hunts,²⁸⁴ this view, as with many popular opinions, is wrong. The evidence from his trial is that he was anything but a saintly man, but rather a rogue, a liar, a domestic abuser, and a man who bragged about his association with Satan while distancing himself from God.

George Burroughs was born around the year 1650 in New England.²⁸⁵ There were and are questions about his racial heritage.²⁸⁶

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Several contemporary and later accounts comment that he was a dark-skinned man.²⁸⁷ It is possible that he was the product of a biracial relationship, either with his father or more likely his mother, engaging in an affair with an Indian or African. However, this cannot be verified. It is also possible that he was fully British, but just had darker features.²⁸⁸ Regardless, although the Puritans had traditionally associated dark skin with Satan, from their unprecedented forgiveness of Tituba it is clear that they were not overly racist. Also, given the authority and respect that had been given to Burroughs prior to the witchcraft accusation, it is clear that they had not in any way held his darker skin against him.

Burroughs graduated from Harvard College in 1670, one year ahead of Samuel Sewall.²⁸⁹ Sewall would later serve on the bench that heard Burroughs's case.²⁹⁰ Sewall and Burroughs would have known each other. According to Sewall's diary, Sewall had at least once invited Burroughs to dine with his family in 1685.²⁹¹

After graduating from Harvard College, Burroughs went into the ministry.²⁹² In Massachusetts, although there was toleration of some religious dissenters, there had previously been persecutions of non-Puritan sects.²⁹³ Baptists and Quakers, in particular, were targeted.²⁹⁴ Burroughs, as a Puritan minister, served as the minister for Salem Village from 1680 until 1683.²⁹⁵ As was typical at the time, and still is today, there was turmoil in the church.²⁹⁶ At some point he had to borrow money from Thomas Putnam, a resident of Salem Village, and had trouble paying it back, although he eventually did.²⁹⁷ Putnam's daughter would later play a star role in the prosecution of Burroughs and other alleged witches. These two facts are often mentioned with the expectation that the conclusion should be drawn that because there was a financial dispute between Burroughs and Thomas Putnam, Putnam's daughter had a motive to fabricate witchcraft stories about Burroughs.²⁹⁸ But it seems unlikely that the Putnams, or any family, would have conspired to kill a man over a ten year old financial dispute which was likely long forgotten and replaced in the memories of the villagers with more recent disputes. Also, the Putnam girl was a mere infant when this dispute with Burroughs first started and likely had no independent memory of it and thus suffered no hard feelings herself. And besides, he did eventually pay back the money, long before he was accused.

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After settling his affairs in Salem, Burroughs left town. He made his way to Maine. When he was arrested for the Salem witchcraft accusations he was living in Wells, Maine and had been serving, apparently part time, as the Puritan²⁹⁹ minister of the local church.³⁰⁰

Burroughs's trial was attended by the respected Puritan minister, Increase Mather, who as demonstrated, along with his son and most of the New England clergy, had been skeptical of witchcraft claims and hesitant to accuse anyone. Yet, after watching the Burroughs trial, even Increase Mather, who later helped to end the witchcraft trials, was convinced that Burroughs was guilty.³⁰¹ Cotton Mather wrote about Burroughs's trial in *Wonders of the Invisible World*, and Increase approved of his son's summary of the evidence against Burroughs.³⁰²

In many of the witchcraft trials the only record we have is from the *Salem Witchcraft Papers* which more often contain depositions and not verbatim transcripts of everything that took place during the trial. We can infer from these accounts what much of the evidence at trial must have been. Much was likely not recorded in these papers and thus the historian is left to try to fill in the holes. However, in the case of the George Burroughs, we know that Increase Mather attended the trial, likely passed on his observations to his son, Cotton, and approved of Cotton's representation of the facts of the case in his book. The fact that both of these men, who were skeptical of witchcraft claims, were absolutely convinced of Burroughs's guilt should be seen as an indication that the evidence was strong. Increase Mather had an opportunity to view the witnesses, to watch as Burroughs defended himself, and to judge the situation. He was honest, upright, and intelligent man. Modern day commentators should feel foolish as they attempt to second guess this trial or to cast unfair and unfounded allegations against Increase Mather, or his son, Cotton.

The evidence against Burroughs was also strong enough to convince the judges (one of whom was a friend and another who had been a relative) to condemn him.³⁰³ As previously discussed, under the traditional standard, two credible witnesses to an act of witchcraft were needed for a conviction. Two such witnesses were offered against Burroughs. Those witnesses, along with his own lies, and the hysterical actions of the victims were enough to convict Burroughs.

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From the court transcripts and also from Cotton Mather's book we can tell what happened at his trial. We know that he was accused by at least five of the "bewitched" as the "author of their miseries" and he was accused by eight of the "confessing witches" as being the head of their group.³⁰⁴ Tituba had said that a tall white minister from Boston led their group.³⁰⁵ Burroughs was not tall³⁰⁶ or light-skinned and did not live in Boston at the time. However, to Tituba a man who was at least partially European such as Burroughs would have appeared white. And if she was a very short woman, he would have appeared tall. She simply may have been confused about the city. In her drug induced states it is likely that she was not paying attention to every detail. Or perhaps another minister led her group. Regardless, it was clear that at least one minister was a leader among the witches and Burroughs was the most likely suspect. Eight of the confessors agreed. But the court did not simply rely on the evidence from the confessors or the bewitched as they would have been relying solely on the Devil's evidence – there was far more convincing evidence against him.

Burroughs was on his third marriage and was well known as a domestic abuser.³⁰⁷ It was alleged that the ghosts of his two previous wives had appeared to the victims to demand justice because Burroughs had murdered them.³⁰⁸ However, as the Devil can deceive, it is wise not to put too much focus on those claims.

Burroughs was a very controlling man who would not even allow his wives to communicate with their respective families without his permission.³⁰⁹ Mather, who was not a proponent of feminism or women's rights, was appalled by the claims that had been made. He noted that:

[T]here came several testimonies relating to the Domestick Affairs of G.B.[Mather could not bring himself to write Burroughs's name] which had a very hard Aspect upon him; and not only prov'd him a very ill Man; but also confirmed the belief of the Character, which had been already fastned on him. 'Twas tesified, that keeping his two Successive Wives in a strange kind of Slavery...³¹⁰

Burroughs beat his wives senselessly and threatened others to keep silent about his abuse.³¹¹ And he would make his wives swear that they would never reveal any of his secrets, whatever they were.³¹²

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There was testimony that Burroughs had used witchcraft to spy on a late wife and then later bragged about it. John Ruck, Burroughs's then brother-in-law, testified that once Burroughs, himself, and his sister (Burroughs's wife) had gone out to gather strawberries a few miles from Burroughs's house. As they were walking home, Burroughs's left them and went into the bushes. The brother and sister stopped and yelled out to him. Burroughs did not answer. The brother and sister then decided to head home without him. They walked at a fast pace. As they walked they looked around and didn't see him. However, when they arrived back at the home they saw Burroughs eating from his basket of strawberries. Burroughs then started to scold his wife for talking about him to her brother. Ruck questioned Burroughs about how he had heard their conversation. Burroughs stated "My God makes known your Thoughts unto me." Burroughs response to this at his trial was that "Ruck and his wife left a Man with him, when they left him." It is hard to see how this is relevant and Ruck said that that was false regardless. The Court asked Burroughs what the man's name was. Mather noted that "his Countenance was much altered; nor could he say, who 'twas."³¹³

It has been speculated that Burroughs simply engaged in a trick.³¹⁴ He hid in some bushes and walked along side of his wife and brother-in-law and listened to their conversation. Sure, he was a bad husband and a trickster, but that is not evidence of witchcraft. However, such an explanation would require one to believe that his wife and brother-in-law were complete idiots. Any reasonably alert person would have been able to hear, if not see, someone walking next to a patch behind some bushes. That is simply not a credible explanation for what had happened. Through some supernatural force, Burroughs was able to become invisible. That was the explanation that made the most sense to Mather and the learned judges of the court.

Burroughs boasting about his God who allowed them to hear their thoughts is revealing. As has been noted, the Christian God does not engage in petty family gossip.³¹⁵ The judges and jurors would have had no doubt about what "god" Burroughs had been referring to.

It is also worth noting that Burroughs had no response to this other than to argue that they left him with a man. Perhaps Burroughs was trying to argue that this man walked with his wife and brother while he went off to pick more berries. But when questioned about this,

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Burroughs clearly appeared to be lying and was unable to give this man's name. As we shall see from another incident, mysterious men, who only Burroughs could see, seemed to follow him around.

The judges and jurors had the opportunity to listen to Ruck, to judge his credibility, and to hear Burroughs's defense of himself.³¹⁶ They believed Ruck.

In addition to the evidence of Burroughs's supernatural ability to become invisible and/or his boasting of Satanic mind reading, there was also testimony about another aspect of Burroughs's witchcraft: his supernatural strength.³¹⁷

Despite the fact that Burroughs was a small man, he had unheard of strength and this was believed to be evidence of witchcraft. There was testimony that Burroughs was able to pick up large guns with one hand. These guns were so heavy that stronger men could not hold them steady with two hands, yet Burroughs did it easily with one. Burroughs at this point in his trial jumped up and claimed that an Indian was also there and held the gun the same way. However, no one else recalled seeing an Indian there.³¹⁸ There was testimony about him picking up large barrels filled with molasses with just his fingers.³¹⁹ There was also testimony after his trial about him picking up a large gun from its muzzle with his finger.³²⁰

There was testimony from Mary Webber, 53 years old, that six or seven years before, Burroughs's then wife heard a loud noise from Burroughs's chamber one night. Burroughs's wife was afraid and asked her female servant to investigate it. The servant said she unable to proceed to the chamber and claimed that she was stopped by an invisible force. Burroughs then came out of his chamber and right after that something appeared to flee down the stairs. Burroughs followed it as it fled out the house. The servant thought that the thing looked like a white calf. Webber also claimed that Burroughs's told her about an experience that sounded like sleep paralysis. And she also confirmed that Burroughs's was a controlling and an abusive husband.³²¹

The judges were also concerned with Burroughs's lack of religious devotion. Despite the fact that he was a Puritan minister, Burroughs told the court that it had been so long since he had taken communion he could not remember. And Burroughs stated that none of his children, except his eldest, were baptized.³²² Bernard

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Rosenthal argues in *Salem Story* that perhaps Burroughs was actually a Baptist, or had Baptist leanings, and argued that normally restrained Increase and Cotton Mather were willing to condone Burroughs's execution because of this, despite the fact that there was not sufficient evidence against him.³²³ But this ignores the fact that both Increase and Cotton Mather were proponents of religious tolerance.³²⁴ The theory also suggests that Increase Mather was not a man of his word as he had previously assured Queen Mary that the colony tolerated most religious dissenters.³²⁵ And it ignores the fact that there had been at least two witnesses to acts of Burroughs's witchcraft (mind reading or invisibility and the use of supernatural strength). What is more likely: that the Mathers were happy to execute an innocent man and to turn their backs on all of their principles or that they were truly convinced by the evidence against Burroughs? And if Increase Mather, a reasonable and intelligent man, witnessed Burroughs's trial and believed in Burroughs's guilt, why are we so quick to dismiss it as an impossibility? With the arrogance of time, we assume that our judgments about the past are always correct.

In addition to the testimony from the witnesses, there is evidence that Burroughs lied in his own defense. An innocent man would not have to lie. Aside from claims of being with men who only he could see, Burroughs was caught in a clear lie by the court. At one point Burroughs read a paper to the jury that argued that witches, if they existed, could not torment people from a distance. The judges knew that this paper came from the philosopher Thomas Ady. Burroughs stated that he had not taken any of it from a book. However, when they told him the quotes were from Ady, Burroughs only said that a man had given him a manuscript and he had transcribed it.³²⁶ Cotton Mather noted that on the whole Burroughs was "faltering, faulty, unconstant, and contrary," in his answers to the court.³²⁷ This was rightly seen as additional evidence of his guilt.

The line that the convictions at Salem were due only to spectral evidence is not true in this case.³²⁸ Burroughs was not convicted because of spectral evidence. The court heard from witnesses who testified about supernatural acts that he, not his specter, did. Even Burroughs could not take issue with the court's verdict, except to say that it was based on lies. John Hale, a minister who later became a critic of the trials, spoke to Burroughs. Hale reported that Burroughs

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“denied all, yet said he justified the Judges and Jury in Condemning of him; because there were so many positive witnesses against him: But said he dyed by false Witnesses.” Hale even tracked down one of the witnesses against Burroughs before his execution to see if the woman would recant. He spoke “seriously” with her and told her that if she was lying she should say so before Burroughs was executed. The woman refused to change her story.³²⁹

Burroughs was hanged on August 19, 1692. Robert Calef, a critic of the trials who also defamed the Mathers and whose credibility is questionable, reported that just before he was hanged, Burroughs stated that he was innocent and prayed the Lord’s Prayer so well that people in the crowd feared that they were killing an innocent man. Just as the crowd was starting to side with Burroughs, Cotton Mather, on horseback, addressed the crowd and stated that Burroughs was not an ordained minister, that he had received a fair trial, and that the Devil can transform himself into an angel of light. The crowd calmed down and Burroughs was executed along with the other convicted witches.³³⁰

The diary of Samuel Sewall, one of the judges, reflects something similar. He noted that there were “a very great number of spectators” who were there, that “all [of the condemned] said they were innocent” and that “Mr. Burroughs, by his speech, prayer, protestation of his innocence, did much move unthinking persons.”³³¹ There is no indication, however, of a dramatic scene where the crowd was about to turn until Cotton Mather, on horseback, calmed them with his speech.

There are a few observations worth making about this. First, it does seem fair to conclude that Burroughs said a prayer before he died and that prayer was likely the Lord’s Prayer. It was a common belief among the masses that a witch could not say the Lord’s Prayer perfectly.³³² Therefore, there likely were people in the crowd who started to doubt the guilt of Burroughs. However, the opinion among many ministers was that witches could say the Lord’s Prayer and that it was a superstition to engage in tests like this.³³³ Cotton Mather, apparently at one point believed in the Lord’s Prayer test as an investigative tool, but did not think it a sure thing.³³⁴

Calef’s story is also interesting because it shows the people turning against an execution while a cleric defended it. This is the opposite of

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what history teaches about the witchcraft trials, but in line with what most people believe. The masses were generally the ones pushing for witch hunts,³³⁵ while the clerics were mostly trying to reign them in.³³⁶ But Calef's story is very memorable and has played a role in twisting the popular understanding of the Salem trials.

Rosenthal in *Salem Story* addresses Calef's credibility and notes that "[a]lthough the account has been questioned by some distinguished scholars, the likelihood of its accuracy remains particularly strong. No friend of Cotton Mather, Calef is a credible reporter here, not in spite of the hostility between him and Mather, but because of it."³³⁷ Rosenthal then goes on to argue that Cotton Mather's statement about Burroughs not being an "ordained Minister" is evidence that Mather may have believed that Burroughs was a Baptist since Puritans did not believe that Baptist ministers were properly ordained.³³⁸ However, such a conclusion is not correct. Burroughs had been an ordained minister. It is hard to imagine that he would not have been allowed to be an official minister of Salem Village or other locations within Massachusetts if he had not been. The only evidence of Burroughs being a Baptist was his unwillingness to use the sacraments. At no time did he ever try to defend himself as being persecuted for being a Baptist. It would have been a good defense, better than anything he had argued. Being a Baptist in 1692 in Massachusetts was not a crime.

Calef's story portrays Mather as making an absurd and easily disprovable claim, that Burroughs was not an ordained minister. It portrays Cotton Mather in the worst possible light, as an extreme witch hunter who stirred up the common people with lies against an innocent man. Calef's account has become accepted as true, when it was likely an exaggeration. We know from Sewall that there were people in the crowd who were convinced by Burroughs's prayer. But to suggest that the majority of the crowd were ready to give up on the witchcraft proceedings and rebel against the authorities is wrong. The common people would have kept up the trials forever. The religious authorities and high officials in the government put an end to the trials later that year after another group of executions.³³⁹

It was not, despite what some claim, the execution of George Burroughs that stopped the Salem witchcraft trials.³⁴⁰ Popular opinion remained in favor of the trials, while the elite continued to question

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what was happening. Although some people were convinced by Burroughs's prayer, most, including many ministers such as Increase Mather, likely still believed that Burroughs was guilty of witchcraft. Increase Mather had serious concerns over the use of spectral evidence, but witnessed Burroughs's trial and was convinced that the verdict was just. Burroughs was hardly a sympathetic character and the evidence against him was strong. His own lies during his trial likely helped to convince many of his guilt.

CHAPTER 5

Samuel Wardwell – a Firebrand of Hell

One of the other misconceptions about the Salem witch trials is that the witches were all from Salem Town and/or Salem Village. While many of the accusations were made against people from these two places, especially Salem Village, others in the area were also charged.³⁴¹

In mid-July of 1692, Joseph Ballard, a constable from nearby Andover, sent a request for help to the authorities in Salem. His wife, Elizabeth, was suffering from some sort of an affliction that he associated with witchcraft. Soon after this, the people of Andover started to accuse each other of witchcraft.³⁴²

One of those accused of witchcraft in Andover was Samuel Wardwell. He was 46 years old in 1692. He was a carpenter. He was married. He was a family man. But he was frustrated with aspects of his life and he had a fascination with the occult. It was believed that the Devil used this fascination to take advantage of him.³⁴³

It is not certain how his name came to the attention of the authorities, but given his reputation it is not surprising that he was named. He was indicted and charged with two offenses, afflicting a sixteen year old girl by the name of Margaret Sprague and with forming a covenant with the Devil.³⁴⁴ The last charge had been unusual, but seems to have been common among the charges that were brought against citizens of Andover. It was a capital offense. Witchcraft allegations generally did not come about unless there was an allegation of actual harm. A person could sit in his cellar all night and make deals with Satan and not find himself in any trouble with the authorities. However, if evidence of this came to light after an allegation of attacking others was made then it became a serious matter.

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In his trial, the court would have heard from Mary Warren and Mary Walcott. As usual they offered only spectral evidence against him. They would not likely have known Wardwell before this hearing as they were from Salem and he was from Andover. That did not stop them from testifying against Wardwell. Both testified about how they saw his specter attack Martha Sprague, a 16 year-old girl from Andover who claimed to be bewitched. Sprague gave evidence that she was attacked by Wardwell's specter before and during his initial examination before the magistrates. Sprague also asserted that she saw Wardwell's specter attacking others.³⁴⁵

If this had been the only evidence against Wardwell, the court should have acquitted him of all charges. However, there was more.

William Perkins in the early part of the 17th century had set out the traditional legal standard for convicting witches. Speaking of evidence of witchcraft he noted that "some signs there are of a witch, more certain and infallible."³⁴⁶ He noted among other things that "among the sufficient means of conviction, the first is, the free and voluntary confession of the crime, made by the party suspected and accused, after examination." He noted that "bare confession" was not "sufficient" without other reason to suspect witchcraft.³⁴⁷ A person could be mentally unstable or confess under duress. He argued that the second ground for a conviction would be testimony from two good and honest witnesses that the accused had entered into a covenant with the devil or had "done some known practice of witchcraft."³⁴⁸ Or there could be enough evidence if there were witnesses who testified that the suspect had "divined things before they come to pass."³⁴⁹

Wardwell had predicted the futures of people in his town and was likely quite well known for it. Ephraim Foster, aged 34, said that he heard Wardwell tell his wife that she would have four girls before she would have a son. His wife did in fact have four girls and then had a son. Foster also heard Wardwell tell the fortune of Dorothy Eames. He reported that Eames said that she believed that Wardwell was a witch or else he would never have been able to tell her future as accurately as he did. Wardwell, according to Foster, would read palms. He would look at the person's hands and then look down to the ground, as if perhaps to look to the Devil to get his information. Foster had witnessed this several times. Also, Foster said he knew that Wardwell could make cattle come to him when he pleased,

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although it is not clear from the evidence if Foster ever personally witnesses that feat.³⁵⁰

Thomas Chandler, aged 65, testified that he had often heard Wardwell tell the fortunes of young people in the town and that Wardwell seemed to be addicted to this practice and enjoyed doing it.³⁵¹

Abigail Martin, aged 16, and John Bridges, age uncertain, both testified that the previous winter Wardwell was at Abigail's father's house with a John Farnom. Abigail heard Farnom ask Wardwell to tell him his fortune and Wardwell did. Wardwell told Farnom many things that either were true or that would happen. At this time, Wardwell also told a young man named Jeams Bridges that Bridges had been in love with a certain girl. Jeams Bridges didn't know how Wardwell could know this as he had never told anyone. John Bridges, Jeam's father, said he heard Jeams ask how Wardwell could be so accurate.³⁵²

The business of fortune telling, while seemingly harmless, was anything but. As previously noted, God does not give people power to engage in petty tricks or information to further gossip.³⁵³ As with Mr. Burroughs's mind reading, this practice depended on an alliance on Satan. Also, in regards to telling of future events, this is also evil in itself. The future belongs solely to the Almighty and to attempt to find it out by reading palms or other means is to infringe on God's sovereignty. If God chooses to reveal future events in His way that is acceptable, but to try to reveal the future on one's own terms has been forbidden in both Christianity and Judaism ever since Saul consulted the witch of Endor to summon the spirit of the dead prophet Samuel.³⁵⁴ In the context of the excitement that was taking place in Salem, Wardwell's fortune telling would have taken on an ominous tone and would not have been seen a harmless prank or game.

In addition to this clear evidence of witchcraft, there was also general reputation evidence that was offered. Joseph Ballard, aged 41, testified that his brother John told him that Wardwell was telling others that Joseph had claimed that Wardwell had bewitched Joseph's wife. Joseph Ballard said that before he heard this he was unaware of his wife having any problems. Joseph Ballard approached Wardwell and assured him that he was not saying this and the thought of Wardwell doing this never crossed his mind.³⁵⁵ This whole story seemed sort of convoluted. Nevertheless, it didn't help.

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But what hurt Samuel Wardwell the most was his confession. Normally, confessors were not executed in these witch trials. As noted above, this was a departure from previous practice as a free and voluntary confession supported by some other evidence was considered the best form of evidence. However, for reasons that are not entirely clear, Wardwell was put on trial and condemned after he confessed. He later renounced his confession to the court.³⁵⁶ It is not clear if Wardwell would have received a reprieve or not at the last moment had he not renounced his confession.³⁵⁷ Another condemned witch who was set to be executed with Wardwell later confessed and was granted a reprieve.³⁵⁸

Because of the fact that confessors were normally not killed at Salem, it is argued that Wardwell's confession had no value. He confessed, not because he was guilty, but because he wanted to save his own life. When he believed that it would not save his life he renounced his confession. He did not want to appear before God as a liar.³⁵⁹ But this ignores the bulk of the evidence against him which involves credible witnesses who accused him of involvement in the dark arts. In theory, even without his confession, there may have been enough evidence against Wardwell to convict him of witchcraft.

Wardwell's confession, whether true or not, was credible to the authorities and meshed with what the people would have believed or known about witchcraft. Wardwell, after he initially denied his involvement, told the court that he had become discontented with his life, especially about his work and because he had been rejected by a young woman. One day, twenty years prior when he was about 26 years old, he saw some cats and a man who called himself a prince. The self-styled prince told Wardwell that he would make sure that Wardwell would live well and even earn the rank of captain, if Wardwell would honor him. Wardwell, who must have believed that he was dealing with Satan, promised to do so.³⁶⁰

About a week later a black man appeared in the same place and also called himself a prince and a lord. It is not clear if this man was the same man who appeared to him before. This man told Wardwell that he must worship and believe in him and that Wardwell would never want for anything. But Wardwell complained that this black man never fulfilled his promises.³⁶¹ Wardwell reported that he had signed this man's book, thus sealing his covenant. He agreed to serve

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Satan until age sixty (60). He complained that when he prayed with his family the Devil would become angry.³⁶²

Wardwell noted that before he signed this covenant with Satan he started to tell fortunes and that sometimes they came to pass. He also told the court about how when an animal would enter his field he would ask the Devil to take it. It was also mentioned that a Constable Foster once said that Wardwell bragged about how he could make all of his cows come around him when he pleased. Wardwell confessed to afflicting Martha Spragua, but said he only did that because he was threatened by the Devil. And he said that he was baptized by a black man, perhaps meant to be George Burroughs, in the river with the full immersion method, and he had renounced his previous baptism.³⁶³

Wardwell was not tortured.³⁶⁴ Perhaps the threat of execution convinced him to give this statement. Perhaps parts of it are embellished. But there is no doubt that he fancied himself as a person with knowledge of the occult and was seen as the person to visit to have one's fortune told. So, much of his statement is likely true.

The evidence was sound against Wardwell and while there may have been mistakes made in other cases caused by relying only on unreliable evidence, there was nothing unconventional or unfair about the treatment that Wardwell received.

Wardwell was part of the last group to be executed. When he and seven others were hanged on September 22, 1692, the Reverend Mr. Nicholas Noyes remarked "What a sad thing it is to see eight firebrands of Hell hanging there."³⁶⁵ In regards to Wardwell, it was a true statement.

Regardless of what one thinks of Wardwell, it is reasonable to argue that his death contributed to the ending of the trials. Because it became clear that confessors could be executed, others who were perhaps not guilty became less willing to offer false confessions. There was less of an incentive to lie. Wardwell was part of the last group of people ever to be executed in English North America for witchcraft.

Others would be tried, including Samuel Wardwell's wife, Sarah Wardwell. In 1693, the Special Court of Oyer and Terminer had been dissolved and remaining cases were brought before the Superior Court of Judicature. Many of the same judges from the first court sat on this court as well; however this time spectral evidence was

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not used. Fifty-two people appeared before the court. All but three were acquitted. Sarah Wardwell was among the condemned. The governor, William Phips, granted them reprieves, however, as he still had his doubts. He asked London for advice and the crown told him to use “the greatest moderation” and to essentially do what he thought was right. Phips pardoned Sarah Wardwell and the remaining persons convicted or accused of witchcraft.³⁶⁶

Chapter 6

Mammy Reed and Candy – Inconclusive Evidence

Chadwick Hansen in his book *Witchcraft at Salem*, which this author has often cited, argued that Bridget Bishop was actually a witch.³⁶⁷ He believed that the evidence was less certain against Sarah Good, George Burroughs, Tituba, and Samuel Wardwell.³⁶⁸ He did, however, argue that two more people, Wilmont Reed and a slave named Candy, were witches.³⁶⁹ This book argues that the evidence against Sarah Good, Tituba, George Burroughs, and Samuel Wardwell was strong enough to prove the allegations against them, but does not accept Hansen's judgments about Candy and Wilmont Reed.

Wilmont Reed, who was executed alongside Samuel Wardwell on September 22, 1692, was from nearby Marblehead, Massachusetts and may have had something of a reputation as the neighborhood witch.³⁷⁰ Known as Mammy Reed, she was married to a local fisherman³⁷¹ and was not formally accused by the authorities before the Salem episode. However, there is very little evidence of witchcraft, other than the alleged reputation for it.

From her examination there is nothing that points to her guilt. She was not caught in any lies. She said that she didn't know what caused the fits of the afflicted persons and expressed some sympathy for them by noting that they were in a "sad condition".³⁷²

There was the usual spectral evidence against her.³⁷³ There was one allegation of actual witchcraft. She had been in a dispute with a woman, Ms Syms. Syms alleged that a servant of Reed had stolen some property from her. When Ms Syms threatened to file charges against the girl, Reed said she wished that Syms would never urinate or defecate again. This upset Ms Syms and she suffered from distemper and a dry belly ache for many months and these symptoms did not go away until after she left the town.³⁷⁴

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This evidence is interesting, but not conclusive. If true, Reed wished that the woman might never relieve herself again. While Ms Syms may have suffered from some digestive issues, there is no evidence that she was not able to expel waste during the months that she remained at Marblehead, much less for the rest of her life. Hansen didn't believe that Reed could literally use magic, but argued that her threat caused a psychosomatic illness in Syms.³⁷⁵ However, the illness produced was not the illness threatened; Syms could relieve herself and apparently suffered no more related medical problems after she moved away.

From this, it is impossible to conclude that Reed was in any way a witch. As noted previously, the Salem records are not complete. But if there was more compelling evidence against Reed it was not recorded. For a woman who had an alleged reputation as being the town witch, it is hard to believe that this was the only non-spectral evidence of witchcraft that could be produced.

It is possible that Reed was simply angry with Syms and said something stupid. Syms didn't suffer from what Reed literally cursed her to. This is not proof beyond a reasonable doubt of witchcraft. It is evidence that she had a temper.

The evidence against the black slave Candy is more compelling. She actually confessed to witchcraft and demonstrated it for the court.

On July 4, 1692, Candy was questioned by the authorities after she came to their attention. She was from Barbados, but denied being involved in witchcraft there. She claimed that her mistress in Massachusetts had made her a witch. She told the court about how her mistress made her sign the Devil's book. The judges asked her how she afflicted her victims. She requested to leave the room. When she was escorted back in, she possessed two napkins, one that had two knots tied in it. As she manipulated these napkins the so-called bewitched people responded as if they were being tortured. As part of a napkin was burned the group loudly cried that they were burning. After the napkins were put in water, two of the group complained that they were choking and the people in the room had to physically stop a third person in the group from running into a nearby river.³⁷⁶

There is an account that some of the judges experimented themselves with these napkins and watched as the afflicted reacted to their actions.³⁷⁷ Were the judges themselves then practicing

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witchcraft?³⁷⁸ Hansen uses this episode to show that witchcraft really was practiced at Salem, but that it had no demonic power.³⁷⁹ The power of witchcraft laid in the fear that it instilled in those who believed in it. A modern man with a rational and scientific view of the world would not in any way have been harmed by the actions of Candy or anyone else manipulating those napkins.

When Candy was eventually tried for witchcraft in 1693 she was found not guilty.³⁸⁰ It is likely that if she had been tried during the summer months of 1692 she would have been convicted as others were condemned on far less evidence. The tides had changed by 1693. The government had returned to a more cautious approach toward witchcraft. Spectral evidence was no longer allowed. Yet, not everyone tried was acquitted. Samuel Wardwell's wife and a few others were condemned.³⁸¹

So why did the jurors have doubts about the testimony relating to Candy? First, under the legal standard of the day they could not convict solely on a confession and they would have judged whether or not the confession was free, voluntary, and true. Apparently the jurors had some serious questions about this when it came to Candy. Reading her confession is not easy as it is clear that she did not have a good command of the English language and/or she was not very intelligent. Perhaps they feared that she had been tricked into confessing. And if her courtroom demonstrations with the napkins were witchcraft, then the judges themselves were also guilty of it because they experimented with the napkins as well and afflicted the victims. With no other evidence against her, the court had to absolve her.

Chadwick Hansen, despite this acquittal, still insisted on calling Candy a witch. However, I think it is wiser to refer to Plato's Socrates who stated "the law says that when a man is acquitted he is free from guilt, and what holds at law may hold in argument."³⁸² The courts both acquitted and convicted people. They convicted too many at the start and perhaps too few at the end. Still, the evidence was heard and a verdict was rendered. The court was not prepared to condemn this slave when it heard the evidence. Her mistress, who allegedly introduced her to witchcraft, was never convicted of witchcraft.

The treatment of Candy, like the treatment of Tituba, is noteworthy because it does tend to cast the mostly Puritan people of New England

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in a good light. There was no lynching. The people believed in truth and justice and did everything possible to provide her with due process. If modern Americans still by and large believed in the power of witchcraft and if witchcraft were still a crime, I think it is highly likely that Candy would have been convicted. Many modern jurors would just look at the confession and convict her. For many Americans her mere skin color would be sufficient evidence. But the people of colonial New England were more intelligent and decent than that. They knew that false confessions were not unheard of and they probed deeper and gave Candy, despite her skin color, the benefit of the doubt.

CHAPTER 7

The Problem of Witchcraft

Witchcraft is not a clear and certain thing. It can be a pact with the Devil to do evil to others. To many it was proto-science and natural healing. Any reasonable person would agree that finding and giving herbal remedies to the sick is hardly evil or in league with the Devil and no one was executed at Salem for being a helpful naturalist. However, between these two extremes there is something else.

Modern day witches expressly deny that they are in the service of Satan.³⁸³ They don't even believe in Satan and instead see themselves as members of a nature religion with links to our pagan past.³⁸⁴

When Christianity came to dominance it incorporated many elements of the ancient pagan faiths.³⁸⁵ Christmas is a mass dedicated to Christ, but it has pagan solstice overtones.³⁸⁶ When the tradition developed it had been common for every day to be named after a saint and the mass was held in honor of that saint. They realized that there should be a specific day set aside to honor Christ in the mass. The winter solstice was the most natural day. The longest night gives birth to the days getting longer. When the Sun comes back into the world it is small, but it gets stronger and comes to its pinnacle in the summer solstice. Christ, like the winter solstice sun, entered this world as a small and helpless child. The winter solstice comes in the depths of winter when things look the darkest. Christ came when we were in the depths of our sins and when the world looked hopeless. It was an appropriate metaphor that worked exceptionally well. Instead of cutting down Evergreens to celebrate nature's enduring power it became a symbol of God's enduring love for his creation and so on.

However, Christianity did not just blindly adopt the pagan traditions of old. Although it accepted some customs, it also made

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an effort to demonize the tenants of the ancient faiths. The ancient horned gods of fertility, such as Pan, were transformed into demonic creatures and into the Devil himself.³⁸⁷ And following these ancient pagan gods was seen as nothing less than devil worship.

The Puritans didn't just reject the tenants of paganism, but also many elements of it, as anti-Christian. They resisted any celebration of Christmas because, among other things, it was too closely associated with Catholicism and Paganism.³⁸⁸ However, this intense concern for not taking part in pagan traditions and customs did not translate into them being more extreme witch hunters than the other Christians. The Puritans were far more restrained in their witch prosecutions than others, especially those in Scotland and Germany.

Regardless of their acceptance or rejection of certain customs, to the Puritans, Catholics, and everyone in between, following the tenants of a pagan religion was Satanism. However, we should know that that is not the case. Our pagan forefathers were not worshipping the Devil. They were mostly good men and women who tried their best to answer the great metaphysical questions that we all consider. And who can honestly say that their religion was any more right or wrong than any other religion? Nature worship may seem to be silly at best or at worst, wrong, to many people, but it is the true faith of our fathers and has not been disproved any more or any less than Christianity. In this respect, who can say that the practice of Wicca, or any pagan religion, is morally wrong?

However, the most odious aspect of witchcraft or Wicca is the casting of spells or use of magic to get what one wants.³⁸⁹ Modern day witches will often assert that they use their magic only for good purposes and never to do evil.³⁹⁰ However, the mere use of magic is itself an evil. The central prayer of Christianity, the Lord's Prayer, asks that God's will be done, not man's. The pagans taught that the Fates dictated what would happen to us and thus their will, not man's, is controlling.³⁹¹ Witchcraft attempts to reach an outcome that is different than what God or the Fates would otherwise allow.

Modern day witches argue that their magic is no different than from when a Christian prays and asks for something.³⁹² However, a true Christian, although he may let God know his wishes, always prays that God's will be done and never attempts to change that through magic. He may ask for what he wants, but he does not trick

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the universe into giving it to him. What he mainly wants is the grace to face whatever God's will may be. The virtuous pagan may likewise ask for what he wants, but always defers to the Fates, and only asks for the honor and courage to endure his destiny.

Witchcraft is an affront to the sovereignty of God or the gods. In this respect it may be completely ineffective. After all, no one can change God or fate. However, to attempt it is an insult to the heavens.

However, witchcraft could be effective if we consider that God has both a perfect and a permissive will. The perfect will is what God intends. God cannot intend evil.³⁹³ However, the permissive will is what he allows because we have free will.³⁹⁴ God did not want Hitler to slaughter people. But He permitted it. God allows the Devil to have some power to harass us for reasons that are not entirely clear.³⁹⁵ And he allows us to make bad or evil decisions. Malevolent witchcraft takes advantage of this to do evil.

However, non-malevolent witchcraft is still evil as it attempts to take away the free will of men, something that even God will not do.³⁹⁶ For example, if a witch puts a love spell on me it may be good for my prospective lover, but might not be good for me. And it takes away my personal choice in who I love. Likewise, if you put out a spell to sell your house it may result in a good deal for you. But the sale may not be good for the buyer. Because of the spell did the buyer not care as much about the water in the basement or the termite problem? Again it takes away the ability of the buyer to make his own free and voluntary decision. Under this scenario, witchcraft, even if not used for overtly evil purposes or even if used for allegedly good purposes, is still evil. It seeks to unduly influence the decisions of others to deprive them of their abilities to make their own decisions. Earlier, a question was raised about the goodness of God and whether or not He was worth following. At the very least it seems that one should give God credit for giving us free will. To join a movement which seeks to take that away from humanity can be nothing but evil.

So, either witchcraft is not effective and an insult to God or the gods, or it is effective and the free will of others is trampled on. Either way it is evil, even if it is the intention of the witch to do a spell that is not overtly evil.

To the extent that witchcraft attempts to predict the future, it is

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also evil. If it is ineffective at predicting future events, it is both a waste of time and possibly money, and gives false hope or fear to those who try to use it, or gives an unfair advantage to those who try it. If I use witchcraft to correctly see the future then I will be better positioned than others to address future problems. I did not get this advantage from hard work or just from luck. It did not come unsolicited from God, but rather because I sought it out by dabbling in the occult. Also, since the future may only be the result of our free wills, if I correctly see the future today that essentially locks in the decisions that others may make and deprives them of their freedom. If a witch who can correctly predict the future tells me that she sees my friend John murdering the governor next week, then John must murder the governor next week. However, if she had never looked into the future, then there is a chance that John and the governor are not locked into this fate. John could, under his free will, change his mind. But the mere act of the witch viewing the future may have sealed his fate.³⁹⁷ Of course, this doesn't address the issue of God's ability to see the future. He can, but perhaps He chooses not to, in order to preserve free will. The act of accurately viewing future events must destroy free will and leave us with only an illusion of it.

Witchcraft, even if not effective as a religious practice, could still be effective against others. Chadwick Hansen in *Witchcraft at Salem* argues quite convincingly about the effect that witchcraft has on the minds of those who believe in it. If I know that a love spell has been put on me I am not likely to think that I must fall in love with the person who is responsible for it. However, a person who believed in the power of the spell might well find himself falling in love with the person responsible for it. If one believed that he was the victim of a more serious and threatening spell, his health could suffer greatly from the stress and he could possibly give up hope and die. The ancient pagans understood this and punished witchcraft for these reasons.

There has been a movement among some modern witches to say that the events at Salem were not an injustice because non-witches were executed, but because witches themselves were targeted. In our modern rational secular society we have and should have freedom of religion, even for those who take part in offensive practices such as witchcraft. However, at the time this type of tolerance was not as

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developed as it is now. And to many of the people who believed in the effectiveness of witchcraft, witchcraft would have been evil, not just in theory, but in practice. In their minds and thus in reality, witchcraft was a very real threat to the existence of their small community on the edge of the world. It was not unlike the threats that we feel that we face today from terrorists. They had to do something to protect their lives and their souls. And they responded in a way that was generally in line with their religion and traditions.

CHAPTER 8

The Devil's Advocate

In the play, *A Man for All Seasons*, there is a scene where Sir Thomas Moore is arguing with his wife, Alice, and William Roper, his son-in-law, about whether or not to arbitrarily have a man named Richard Rich arrested. Roper and Alice Moore wanted Rich arrested because they viewed him as dangerous, which was not a wrong assessment as Rich's testimony later led to Moore's death. However, the fictional Moore³⁹⁸ resisted these calls because there was not then any evidence that Rich had violated the law. Moore stated that even if Roper were the Devil himself, he should be left alone until he violated the law. Roper said, "So, now you give the Devil the benefit of law!" Moore replied, "Yes! What would you do? Cut a great road through the law to get after the Devil?" Roper replied, "Yes, I'd cut down every law in England to do that!" Moore responded by stating:

Oh? And when the last law was down, and the Devil turned 'round on you, where would you hide, Roper, the laws all being flat? This country is planted thick with laws, from coast to coast, Man's laws, not God's! And if you cut them down, and you're just the man to do it, do you really think you could stand upright in the winds that would blow then? Yes, I'd give the Devil benefit of law, for my own safety's sake!³⁹⁹

This dialog underscores a long-standing tradition in western thought that is typically ignored or disregarded by the unwashed and unthinking masses. It contains the idea that we only prosecute people, even people who scare us or who we do not like, for breaking laws and we do so only when we have sound evidence. We allow the accused to have a fair trial, regardless of the stakes, real or imagined. When we deviate from this principle, all hell really does break loose.

The comparisons to the so-called War on Terror that America faces

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today are apt,⁴⁰⁰ although today we are far safer than the average New Englanders of the 17th century were. They faced devastating wars and brutal attacks by the Indians. But much like the people of early colonial New England we sometimes feel that we are under siege from a hostile enemy who doesn't look like us and who has a faith that we know little about. The Indians had taken out whole New England villages and were a far more serious threat to the colonists than the Islamic terrorists are today. However, if the Islamic terrorists were to gain access to weapons of mass destruction then they could be a bigger threat to us than the Indians were to the colonists. Yet, we easily sit back and condemn the colonists for their public witch trials, but don't speak up loudly enough about the secret terror trials that our government pushed for.⁴⁰¹ We condemn the colonists for the occasional and not widespread use of moderate forms of torture, but are comfortable with our government engaging in torture and outsourcing more extreme torture to other countries.⁴⁰² We condemn the colonial courts for using spectral evidence and for not following the traditional standards of evidence in most of the witchcraft cases, yet we are happy if our government uses inadmissible hearsay and secret evidence in terrorism cases.⁴⁰³ They knew all of the accused witches, many of who were miserable people to begin with, were guilty. We know that the accused terrorists are guilty.⁴⁰⁴ We condemn the colonials for bending some of the rules, while we sit back, fat and happy, and smile as the rule of law is destroyed to protect our so-called freedom.

Of course, the willingness to ignore the law when suitable is not just a trait that belongs to the political right. Self-styled liberals are just as willing to throw out tradition and sound legal theory when it can accomplish a goal. Witness the left using the courts to create a right to an abortion, despite the fact that that was never the original intent of the framers of the Constitution. But that was the desired liberal result, so the law and courts were twisted to create this right. Similar things are happening now with gay marriage. A strong case can be made for gay marriage, but to assert it as a constitutional right is absurd. It certainly was not the intent of the framers of the Federal Constitution to create this right. One would be hard pressed to find a state constitution where this was part of the original intent. If the framers intended this right to be present they likely would have said

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something. This does not take away from the justice behind such a cause, but even a just cause must achieve its goal through moral means. When the law is twisted to achieve an end, no matter how popular or even how morally right that end is, the law is damaged and justice is harmed. The law is a harsh mistress and demands that we do things correctly.

The abuse of the law to achieve goals is not limited to grand questions such as how we deal with threats such as terrorism or gay marriage, but also plays a part in the day-to-day operations of the legal system. Any criminal defendant, regardless of the charge, or regardless of what we might think of him or her is entitled to due process and fairness in a just system. The case of Lori Drew is just another example of the government ignoring the law in order to prosecute a person it believed to be morally reprehensible.

Lori Drew was a middle aged woman from Missouri who had a teenage daughter. Apparently there was some friction between Drew's daughter and Megan Meier, another teen girl. Drew created a fake internet account on the free social networking website MySpace.com which she used to communicate with Meier. Drew pretended to be a teenage boy who was interested in Meier. Drew argued that her intent was to protect her own daughter from harassment. However, in the course of this communication hateful words were exchanged and Meier took the dramatic step of killing herself.⁴⁰⁵

Local prosecutors decided that there was not a criminal case against Drew. Although her conduct was irresponsible, if not downright evil, it violated no law. A Federal prosecutor in Missouri also reviewed the case and decided that there was no case against Mrs. Drew.⁴⁰⁶

However, U.S. Attorney Thomas O'Brien, of the Central District of California, brought charges against Drew for violating the Computer Fraud and Abuse Act, a law which was intended to prosecute hackers. At a trial in Los Angeles, where the so-called victim, Myspace.com, was based, Ms. Drew was convicted by a jury of violating this law.⁴⁰⁷

The law in question was meant to target hackers. However, under the government's theory, anyone who ever broke a term of service agreement could be guilty under this act, even though no one reads those things to begin with. The government's theory, which no serious scholar supports, was that by creating a fake account on this free service, Drew gained unauthorized access to the Myspace.com

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site. This would mean that if one ever gave inaccurate information while on an internet site, or if one otherwise violated a term of service agreement, one could face criminal charges in a federal court and the very real possibility of being sent to federal prison for a few years, where one would endure body cavity searches, a lack of privacy, and the real chance of being assaulted or killed by other inmates, among other things.⁴⁰⁸

Despite the chilling effect that this would have, it seemed like the overwhelming opinion among the population was that Mrs. Drew had this coming and that she deserved to be sent to prison.⁴⁰⁹ It is highly likely that the convictions in this case will not survive an appeal.⁴¹⁰ But for even bringing this case, U.S. Attorney Thomas O'Brien should win the Salem Witch Trial Award⁴¹¹ for his role in ignoring the rule of law in order to secure a conviction that was for the moment politically popular. And all of those who cheered this illegal prosecution because they had such strong dislike for the actions of the defendant should reconsider their position and think about how their conduct has contributed to the breakdown of law and justice.

Earlier it was argued, in a somewhat facetious way, that the law can develop. That spectral evidence was given the proper weight, even if it was not considered anything close to conclusive before. But justice requires that the law should not develop too swiftly or merely in response to political winds or to a community's fear or hatred. To the extent that the law is allowed to develop it should do so slowly and cautiously and not in response to the demands of an angry or anxious community.

Most of the people of Massachusetts supported the witch trials and believed that the persons prosecuted were guilty.⁴¹² That is why they were willing to bend the rules. These people were not monsters. They were otherwise decent men and women. But they were filled with typical human emotions, including fear. The government, instead of trying to calm their fears and to respond in a cautious way, gave into those fears and bent the rules to make sure that no alleged witch escaped "justice".

CHAPTER 9

Conclusion, Better That Ten Should Escape

As was noted above, the minister Increase Mather, like his son Cotton Mather, was conservative in his judgments against others for witchcraft, while still believing in the reality of witchcraft. He had attended the trial of George Burroughs and was convinced by the evidence that Burroughs was in fact a witch. Yet he and other ministers still had doubts about the trials in Salem. The traditional standard of conviction, which usually required two sound witnesses to an act of witchcraft or a believable confession affirmed by some other evidence, had not been followed. Many had tactfully expressed their concerns.⁴¹³

In September of 1692, Mather published a book called *Cases of Conscience Concerning Evil Spirits Personating Men, Witchcrafts, Infallible Proofs of Guilt*. In it he continued to defend the court, perhaps simply out of courtesy, but he also warned against basing convictions on spectral evidence because he feared it would lead to the execution of innocent people.⁴¹⁴ As a Christian minister this was not an unimportant issue to him. He believed it was a grave sin to take innocent life, so much so that he wrote, “[i]t were better that ten suspected Witches should escape, than that one innocent Person should be Condemned . . . It is better that a Guilty Person should be absolved, than that he should without sufficient ground of Conviction be condemned.”⁴¹⁵ Far from being a witch-hunting monster, Increase Mather, like his son and many other ministers at the time, was a civil libertarian of sorts who believed deeply in protecting the rights of all, even alleged witches. Mather believed that witchcraft was a serious threat to his community, the same way we might look at drugs or terrorism today, but he strongly embraced the idea that we must

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protect the rights of all and follow just and fair laws. The risk of not doing so is too great.

Increase Mather's book has been credited as one of the reasons why the witch trials and executions ended.⁴¹⁶ He expressed his doubts about spectral evidence. And no one could seriously argue with him, or the overwhelming majority of his fellow ministers, that the Devil could take the shape of an innocent person. The judges and jurors were not clerics and could not reasonably disagree with such strong and assertive statements from such a respected minister.

The then-governor of Massachusetts, William Phips, who had been out of the area fighting Indians during much of this time, became concerned about what was going on once he returned and heard complaints about how the trials were being conducted. Phips, who was close with Increase Mather, possibly discussed the situation with him.⁴¹⁷ Phips then ended the use of spectral evidence and halted the trials at the infamous Special Court of Oyer and Terminer that had been set to hear the witch cases.⁴¹⁸

Witchcraft did not cease to be a concern. But a far bigger concern was that innocent people may have been killed and that the legal standards of the day had been abandoned. The proverbial forest had been cut down to find the Devil and now the community had turned on itself and there was no place for an innocent person to hide. Anyone could be accused and convicted on spectral evidence, so no one was safe. The people of colonial New England, especially their leaders, were not mindless monsters obsessed with destroying the Devil. Most were thoughtful people. They recognized what was going on and what could happen if it continued. They had stared into the abyss and were now running from it.

During the later trials in 1692 and 1693, almost everyone brought to trial was acquitted. However, as noted above, three people, including Sarah Wardwell, were convicted and condemned. This court was headed by William Stoughton, the Lieutenant Governor who also had headed the previous court. Stoughton, who would never apologize for his role, believed that he followed the command to disregard spectral evidence and believed that the jury had reached the right conclusion regarding these people. Nevertheless, Governor Phips still had some concerns. To the dismay of Stoughton, Phips halted the executions and, as noted above, wrote to London for

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advice. Queen Mary responded with the caution that he use “the greatest moderation” in dealing with persons accused of witchcraft, but otherwise essentially told him to do what he thought was right. Phips released the convicted and there were no further trials.⁴¹⁹

The concept of following the law, even in frightening times, is the lesson that should be learned from Salem. But this is not to say that witchcraft did not exist in Salem. It did. Bridget Bishop, Tituba, Sarah Good, George Burroughs, and Samuel Wardwell were almost certainly guilty of it. If the events of Salem had followed the typical legal pattern of the past, it is reasonable to speculate that Tituba would have been tried and executed. Perhaps some or all of the above would have also been put on trial and perhaps executed. But others, for whom the evidence was extremely weak to non-existent, would have never been charged, much less convicted and hanged.

Because the witchcraft trials did not proceed as they should have and many innocent people were likely imprisoned and some killed, much soul searching was provoked. The Reverend John Hale, who had been a supporter of the trials at start, but who later became critical of them, wrote a book in 1697 entitled *A Modest Enquiry Into the Nature of Witchcraft*. It was published in 1702. In it he made two conclusions. The first was that, “we may hence see ground to fear, that there hath been a great deal of innocent blood shed in the Christian World, by proceeding upon unsafe principles, in condemning persons for Malefick Witchcraft.”⁴²⁰ However, he then argued that, “there have been great sinful neglects in sparing others, who by their divinings about things future, or discovering things secret, as stollen Goods, etc., or by their informing of persons and things absent at a great distance, have implored the assistance of a familiar spirit . . .”⁴²¹ Hale, an educated and decent man who was involved with the proceedings was concerned about witchcraft, but was more concerned with not killing innocent people.

After the trials many of the jurors also felt that they had made mistakes and issued a statement that said, in part “for want of knowledge in ourselves and better information from others, prevailed with to take up with such evidence against the accused as on further consideration and better information we justly fear was insufficient for the touching the lives of any . . .”⁴²² They followed the law as told to them by the judges and many of them may not have known better,

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but they didn't feel that that let them off the hook. They played a part in the trials, a vital part, and because of their actions innocent people had died.

In January of 1697, the government of the colony called for a day of fasting and prayer to serve as penance for the sins of the community, especially because they feared that God was angry for the taking of innocent life in the witchcraft trials. At a church service that day, Samuel Sewall, one of the judges, stood while his apology was read to the congregation. It said in part that "he is upon many accounts more concerned than any that he knows of, desires to take the blame and shame of it, asking pardon of men and especially desiring prayers that God, who has unlimited authority, would pardon that sin . . ." ⁴²³ Sewall never apologized for believing in witchcraft or for condemning any particular person, but understood that innocent people likely had been executed because he did not do his job correctly. And he suffered tremendous grief over it.

Ann Putnam, a young lady who was responsible for many convictions because of her claims that she was being attacked by the specters of various people, also took some responsibility for her actions. Although she never said that her conduct was intentional, she did concede that perhaps Satan had used her as a tool to attack innocent people. When she was accepted into full communion at her church in Salem Village in 1706 she stood as the minister read her statement. It said in part:

I then being in my childhood should by such a providence of God be made an instrument for yt accuseing of severall persons of a grievous crime wherby their lives were taken away from them, whom now I have just grounds and good reason to believe they were innocent persons, and yt it was a great delusion of Satan yt deceived me in that sad time, whereby I justly fear I have been instrumental with others tho' ignorantly and unwittingly to bring upon myself & this land the guilt of innocent blood Though what was said or done by me against any person I can truly and uprightly say before God & man I did it not out of any anger, malice, or ill will to any person for I had no such thing against one of them; but what I did was ignorantly being deluded by Satan.⁴²⁴

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She went on and took special care to exonerate Rebecca Nurse and her two sisters.⁴²⁵ Nurse had been a member of the church in Salem Town.⁴²⁶ One of her sisters, Mary Eastey, was also executed for witchcraft.⁴²⁷ Sarah Cloyce, her other sister, who had been accused by not convicted, had been a member of Anne Putnam's church, and presumably Cloyce and her family were still members at the time of this apology.⁴²⁸ From her statement, it seems as though she said that everyone she accused was innocent. That was not the case, but in her mind it was better to exonerate everyone, than to continue to wrongly condemn anyone's reputation.

It is hotly debated between historians as to whether Putnam and the other accusers were simply liars or in a hysterical fit or something along those lines. Rosenthal in *Salem Story* takes a hard line that they were liars. Hansen, in *Witchcraft at Salem*, takes the position that they were suffering from hysteria. Yet the people of her day apparently accepted her explanation that it was a demonic delusion, an explanation that most elites laugh at today. Nevertheless, had the judges done their jobs properly, the stories told by the afflicted would not have caused any innocent person to die.

Others in the community also sought to right the wrongs committed. A committee was later formed by the government to absolve and compensate those who had been convicted. There were some, such as Sarah Wardwell, who although free, were considered to be without rights because the felony convictions against them were never reversed. They were under what was called an attainder and as a result they were considered dead to the law. In 1703, after they filed a petition, Sarah Wardwell, Abigail Faulkner Sr., and Elizabeth Proctor had the attainders against them reversed by the colonial government.⁴²⁹ A few years later, in 1711, the attainders were reversed against 22 people, including Sarah Good, George Burroughs, and Samuel Wardwell. Restitution was also paid to their families.⁴³⁰

However, the attainders were not lifted against Bridget Bishop, Wilmot Reed, Susannah Martin, Alice Parker, and Margaret Scott. Chadwick Hansen suggested that the fact that the attainders were not lifted against Bishop and Reed is evidence of their guilt. But he makes no argument that the other women were also guilty.⁴³¹ According to Cotton Mather, Susannah Martin was a witch.⁴³² Much of the evidence against her was spectral and a lot of it was likely the

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result of nightmares.⁴³³ Martin may or may not have been a witch. There was an account of her having supernatural power and also of her harming livestock.⁴³⁴ She also had been previously charged with witchcraft, although exonerated.⁴³⁵ The evidence against Alice Parker was almost entirely spectral and she did not confess.⁴³⁶ The evidence that we can find regarding Margaret Scott indicates that the case against her was entirely built on spectral evidence,⁴³⁷ so there is no apparent reason why she would not have been cleared.

Therefore, it would be a mistake to jump to conclusions about why certain people were included or excluded from the 1711 reversal of attainders. Perhaps the names of Bishop, Reed, Martin, Parker, and Scott were not included due to a bureaucratic oversight. Or maybe the men responsible for this decision had more information than what survives today. Nevertheless, with fresh eyes we can look at the evidence and reach our own conclusions. And based on that evidence we can say that Bridget Bishop, Tituba, Sarah Good, George Burroughs, and Samuel Wardwell almost certainly did practice witchcraft and that the convictions against them were fair. The convictions against many others were not.

Those propositions could be debated forever. Everyone who was involved is dead, but the story of the Salem witch trials is still alive today in the minds of countless people, with all of the twisted facts and mistaken historical accounts that surround it. Hopefully this little book will dispel many of those inaccuracies.

The witch trials are part of a history, our present, and our future. The challenge for historians, and for average people as well, is to continue to dig deeper into the facts and to question conclusions and assumptions. I hope that this book encourages more discussion about this historical event. We should consider that witchcraft was, and perhaps is, real and that it was practiced at Salem. However, nothing about that conclusion takes away from the fact that injustices were carried out against innocent people. And that those injustices were allowed to happen because people, who were otherwise decent and moral, gave way to their fears and hatreds and put the law, justice, and fairness aside.

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Endnotes

- 1 For just one example of this, see “WikiAnswers What are the names of three witches burned at stake?” (WikiAnswers), http://wiki.answers.com/Q/What_are_th_names_of_three_witches_burned_at_stake (accessed January 10, 2009). This question is in the “Colonial America” section of this website. On WikiAnswers people submit questions which are answered. The person who responded to this question disabused the writer to the notion that convicted witches were burned in New England and provided other information as well. A simple web search would find others asking similar questions and receiving similar responses.
- 2 See Bernard Rosenthal, *Salem Story: Reading the Witch Trials of 1692* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 209-210. Rosenthal addresses the never-ending statements that the convicted witches were burned at Salem and speculates as to some reasons why he believes that this idea persists.
- 3 Burning convicted witches was mainly done in Continental Europe and Scotland. In England and the parts of America settled by England the convicted witches were hanged. See Margaret Alice Murray, *The Witch-cult in Western Europe: A Study in Anthropology* (New York: Oxford at Clarendon Press, 1921), available at <http://books.google.com>, 20.
- 4 At least one scholar made essentially the same argument when he discussed the possibility that an invisible Sarah Good was tormenting children after her arrest, but “did not have the sense to get out of town . . .” He took this as evidence that she was not a witch. See Rosenthal, *Salem Story*, 17.
- 5 See Cotton Mather, *The Wonders of the Invisible World* (London: John Russell Smith, 1862), available at <http://books.google.com>, 48. Mather wrote “The *Devil*, in the prosecution, and the execution of his *wrath* upon them, often gets a *Liberty* to make a *Descent* upon the Children of men. When the Devil *does hurt* unto us, he *comes down* unto us; for the Rendezvouze of the

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Infernal Troops, is indeed in the *supernal parts* of our Air. But as 'tis said, *A sparrow of the Air does not fall down without the will of God* ; so I may say, *Not a Devil in the Air, can come down without the leave of God*. Of this we have a famous Instance in that Arabian Prince, of whom the Devil was not able so much as to *Touch* any thing, till the most high God gave him a permission, to *go down*. The Devil stands with all the Instruments of death, aiming at us, and begging of the Lord, as that King ask'd for the Hood-wink'd *Syrians* of old, *Shall I smite 'em, shall I smite 'em* ? He cannot strike a blow, till the Lord say, *Go down and smite*, but sometimes he *does* obtain from the *high possessor of Heaven and Earth*, a License for the doing of it. The Devil sometimes does make most rueful Havock among us; but still we may say to him, as our Lord said unto a great Servant of his, *Thou couldst have no power against me, except it were given thee from above*. The Devil is called in 1 Pc<. 5. 8. *Your Adversary*. This is a Law-term; and it notes *An Adversary at Law*. The Devil cannot come at us, except in some sence according to *Law* ; but sometimes he does procure sad things to be inflicted, according to the *Law* of the eternal King upon us."

- 6 Many of the court documents reflect the belief that the witch was in the service of the Devil and could inflict harm on the witch if he/she didn't do his bidding. The most obvious example of this may be found in the examination of Tituba, the Indian slave. See Paul Boyer and Stephen Nissenbaum, eds., *The Salem Witchcraft Papers: Verbatim Transcripts of Legal Documents of the Salem Witchcraft Outbreak of 1692* (New York: Da Capo Press, 1977), <http://etext.virginia.edu/salem/witchcraft/texts/transcripts.html>.
- 7 Wikipedia contributors, "People of the Salem Witch Trials," *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*, http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=People_of_the_Salem_Witch_Trials&oldid=262821376 (accessed January 10, 2009). Notes that Mary (Perkins) Bradbury escaped after being convicted and that John Alden, Edward Bishop Jr., Sarah (Wilds) Bishop, William Barker Sr., Edward Farrington, Elizabeth (Walker) Cary, Phillip English, and Mary (Hollingsworth) English escaped before they were tried. Either the Salem jail was not

the most secure place in the world, or these people were allowed by the Devil to use their witchcraft to escape.

- 8 Rosenthal, *Salem Story*, 193. “Clerical opposition, however, was not sufficient in a colony that existed as a theocracy only in future mythologies.”
- 9 Charging persons with having a literal pact with Satan seemed more common with the supposed Andover witches. No person charged with witchcraft was charged with only having a pact with Satan. Harm to others was always alleged.
- 10 See Chadwick Hansen, *Witchcraft at Salem* (New York: George Braziller, 1992), 12. Hansen wrote “Witches were burned on the Continent and in Scotland, where witchcraft was a heresy, but hanged in England and New England where it was a felony.”
- 11 Ibid. “Burning seems not to have been motivated by a wish to inflict a particularly painful death; Scottish witches, for instance, were first garroted by the executioner, who then proceeded to burn the corpse and scatter its ashes. Most probably, burning was an attempt to prevent the resurrection of the body.” Likely he means at the General Resurrection. Although the English and New English likely had no fear of the witches coming back to life during this life. They also did not feel the need to judge the soul of the witch. Perhaps the witch could repent, even while on the gallows, and thus it would not be right to try to deny such a person participation in the General Resurrection. From Cotton Mather’s attempt to convert the Irish witch, Goody Glover, it is clear that the Puritans, at least, believed in redemption even for witches.
- 12 Ibid.
- 13 See Johann Jakob Herzok and Philip Schaff, et al., *The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge* (New York: Funk and Wagnalls Company, 1912), available at <http://books.google.com>, 392. “Between 1646 and 1688 twelve persons were executed for this offense in New England (W. F. Poole, in J. Winsor’s *Memorial Hist, of Boston*, ii. 133, Boston, 1881), and this is only a small proportion of prosecutions some of which resulted in acquittal . . .”

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- 14 Eva Laplante, *Salem Witch Judge: The Life and Repentance of Samuel Sewall* (New York: Harper Collins, 2007), 173.
- 15 “Adherents.com: National & World Religion Statistics - Church Statistics - World Religions” <http://www.adherents.com/>.
- 16 There is not a specific citation that can be given, but the reader can take note of the fact that Christianity and Islam, two major religions, generally teach that such a creature exists.
- 17 Many modern witches or people who practice Wiccan would dispute this. But it is the traditional and Christian interpretation.
- 18 I came up with this view independently of anyone else, but I was not the first to express it. See Barrett Wendell, *Stelligeri, and Other Essays Concerning America* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1893), 136 – 137 in the essay “Were the Salem Witches Guiltless”, available at <http://books.google.com>. “[I]t would not have been strange if now and then wretched men, finding in their endless introspection no sign of the divine marks of grace, and stimulated in their mysticism beyond modern conception by the churches that claimed and imposed an authority almost unsurpassed in history, had been tempted to seek, in premature alliance with the powers of evil, at least some semblance of the freedom that their inexorable God had denied them.”
- 19 Exod. 34:11 “Observe thou that which I command thee this day: behold, I drive out before thee the Amorite, and the Canaanite, and the Hittite, and the Perizzite, and the Hivite, and the Jebusite.”, Deut. 7:2 “And when the LORD thy God shall deliver them before thee; thou shalt smite them, and utterly destroy them; thou shalt make no covenant with them, nor shew mercy unto them:”, Deut 20:16-17 “But of the cities of these people, which the LORD thy God doth give thee for an inheritance, thou shalt save alive nothing that breatheth: But thou shalt utterly destroy them; namely, the Hittites, and the Amorites, the Canaanites, and the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites; as the LORD thy God hath commanded thee:”, Josh. 6:21 “And they utterly destroyed all that was in the city, both man and woman, young and old, and ox, and sheep, and ass, with the edge of the sword.”, Num 31:1-18 “And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Avenge

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the children of Israel of the Midianites: afterward shalt thou be gathered unto thy people. And Moses spake unto the people, saying, Arm some of yourselves unto the war, and let them go against the Midianites, and avenge the LORD of Midian. Of every tribe a thousand, throughout all the tribes of Israel, shall ye send to the war. So there were delivered out of the thousands of Israel, a thousand of every tribe, twelve thousand armed for war. And Moses sent them to the war, a thousand of every tribe, them and Phinehas the son of Eleazar the priest, to the war, with the holy instruments, and the trumpets to blow in his hand. And they warred against the Midianites, as the LORD commanded Moses; and they slew all the males. And they slew the kings of Midian, beside the rest of them that were slain; namely, Evi, and Rekem, and Zur, and Hur, and Reba, five kings of Midian: Balaam also the son of Beor they slew with the sword. And the children of Israel took all the women of Midian captives, and their little ones, and took the spoil of all their cattle, and all their flocks, and all their goods. And they burnt all their cities wherein they dwelt, and all their goodly castles, with fire. And they took all the spoil, and all the prey, both of men and of beasts. And they brought the captives, and the prey, and the spoil, unto Moses, and Eleazar the priest, and unto the congregation of the children of Israel, unto the camp at the plains of Moab, which are by Jordan near Jericho. And Moses, and Eleazar the priest, and all the princes of the congregation, went forth to meet them without the camp. And Moses was wroth with the officers of the host, with the captains over thousands, and captains over hundreds, which came from the battle. And Moses said unto them, Have ye saved all the women alive? Behold, these caused the children of Israel, through the counsel of Balaam, to commit trespass against the LORD in the matter of Peor, and there was a plague among the congregation of the LORD. Now therefore kill every male among the little ones, and kill every woman that hath known man by lying with him. But all the women children, that have not known a man by lying with him, keep alive for yourselves.” I could go on with more.

- 20 John 3:36 “He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of

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God abideth on him.” This, of course, need not be taken literally. Christ’s message could have a deeper meaning that has been missed by many Christians.

- 21 Boyer and Nissenbaum, eds., *The Salem Witchcraft Papers*. Tituba claimed in the first examination that she was threatened by the other witches to harm the children: “no there is 4 women and one man they hurt the children and then lay all upon me and they tell me if I will not hurt the children they will hurt me.” She also claimed that she was threatened with harm if she did not serve a black dog, who likely was Satan: “the black dog said serve me but I said I am a fraid he said if I did not he would doe worse to me.”
- 22 Ibid. A few examples: From the examination of William Barker, Sr. “That the devil demanded of him to give up himself soul & Body unto him, which he promesed todoe. He said he had a great family, the world went hard with him and was willing to pay every man his own, And the devil told him he would pay all his debts and he should live comfortably”. From the examination of Mary Bridges, Jr. “s’d a yellow bird appeared to her: out of dores: & bid her serve him: he promised me mony s’d she and fine Cloathes & I promised to serve him.” And the examination of Abigail Hobbs, April 19, 1692, “They would give me fine clothes.” This was also in return for service to Satan. Interesting, Bridges, Hobbs and others were not required to serve Satan for life, but only for a period of time, two years in their cases. Sadly, it is often alleged that the Devil did not follow through on his promises.
- 23 See Wikipedia contributors, “A Man for All Seasons (1966 film),” Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia, [http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=A_Man_for_All_Seasons_\(1966_film\)&oldid=263013446](http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=A_Man_for_All_Seasons_(1966_film)&oldid=263013446) (accessed January 17, 2009). “Why Richard, it profits a man nothing to lose his soul for the whole world... but for Wales?” Although it is a work of fiction, it is a fitting example.
- 24 Cotton Mather, *The Wonders of the Invisible World*, 44.
- 25 This is not a statement that can be proved. Traditionally prostitution

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has been seen as the oldest profession, with others battling it out for second place. Witchcraft goes back to Antiquity, at least.

- 26 See Howard Williams, *The Superstitions of Witchcraft* (London: Longman, Green, Longman, Roberts & Green, 1865), available at <http://books.google.com>, 10. “The origin of witchcraft and the vulgar diabolism is to be found in the rude beginnings of the religious or superstitious feeling which, known amongst the present savage nations as Fetishism, probably prevailed almost universally in the earliest ages; while that of the sublimer magic is discovered in the religious systems of the ancient Chaldeans and Persians. Chaldea and Egypt were the first, as far as is known, to cultivate the science of magic: the former people long gave the well-known name to the professional practisers of the art. Cicero (*de Divinations*) celebrates, and the Jewish prophets frequently deride, their skill in divination and their modes of incantation.”
- 27 For example, witchcraft exists in Islam. As recently as 2008, a woman was sentenced to death in Saudi Arabia for practicing witchcraft. Fawza Falih was accused, among other things, of bewitching a man and making him impotent. Appeals have been made by at least one human rights organization on her behalf. It is unclear if she has been executed as of this date. See Heba Saleh, “Pleas for condemned Saudi ‘witch’” BBC News, February 14, 2008, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/7244579.stm.
- 28 See Howard Williams, *The Superstitions*, 52.
- 29 Jan Irvin, “Shamanism: The Oldest Religion in the World. The Religion of Experience,” Gnostic Media, <http://www.gnosticmedia.com/shamanism.html>. See also the various writings of Terrence McKenna on this topic.
- 30 Wikipedia contributors, “Shamanism,” *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*, <http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Shamanism&oldid=264599288> (accessed January 17, 2009).
- 31 See King Hammurabi of Babylon, *Code of Laws*, trans. C.H.W. Johns, (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1903), available at Gutenberg Press <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/17150/17150.txt> . “If a man weave a spell and put a ban upon a man, and has not

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justified himself, he that wove the spell upon him shall be put to death.”

32 Howard Williams, *The Superstitions*, 23.

33 Ibid.

34 Ibid, 19-31. Constantine, the first Christian emperor of Rome, unheld the previous prohibitions on using magic to harm others. The distinction between the use of magic to help versus the use of it to harm was later ignored by Christians.

35 See Ibid, 31- 33. “Not many years after the death of Julian the Christian Empire witnessed a persecution for witchcraft that for its ferocity, if not for its folly, can be paralleled only by similar scenes in the fifteenth or seventeenth century. It began shortly after the final division of the East and West in the reigns of Valentinian and Valens, A.D. 373. The unfortunate accused were pursued with equal fury in the Eastern and Western Empires; and Rome and Antioch were the principal arenas on which the bloody tragedy was consummated. Gibbon informs us that it was occasioned by a criminal consultation, when the twenty- four letters of the alphabet were ranged round a magic tripod; a dancing ring placed in the centre pointed to the first four letters in the name of the future prince. ‘ The deadly and incoherent mixture of treason and magic, of poison and adultery, afforded infinite gradations of guilt and innocence, of excuse and aggravation, which in these proceedings appear to have been confounded by the angry or corrupt passions of the judges. They easily discovered that the degree of their industry and discernment was estimated by the imperial court according to the number of executions that were furnished from their respective tribunals. It was not without extreme reluctance that they pronounced a sentence of acquittal ; but they eagerly admitted such evidence as was stained with perjury or procured by torture to prove the most improbable charges against the most respectable characters. The progress of the inquiry continually opened new subjects of criminal prosecution; the audacious informers whose falsehood was detected retired with impunity: but the wretched victim who discovered his real or pretended accomplices was seldom permitted to receive the price of his

infamy. From the extremity of Italy and Asia the young and the aged were dragged in chains to the tribunals of Rome and Antioch. Senators, matrons, and philosophers expired in ignominious and cruel tortures. The soldiers who were appointed to guard the prisons declared, with a murmur of pity and indignation, that their numbers were insufficient to oppose the flight or resistance of the multitude of captives. The wealthiest families were ruined by fines and confiscations; the most innocent citizens trembled for their safety: and we may form some notion of the magnitude of the evil from the extravagant assertion of an ancient writer [Ammianus Marcellinus], that in the obnoxious provinces the prisoners, the exiles, and the fugitives formed the greatest part of the inhabitants.”

- 36 See xxvi in this section. Also see “Witchcraft torture three jailed” BBC News, July 8, 2005, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/england/london/4663719.stm. A trial in England of Africa immigrants found that a child had been tortured by her aunt and associates because they believed the eight year old was practicing witchcraft. Also see B.A. Robinson, “Witchcraft in Asia and sub-Saharan Africa” Religious Tolerance, July 27, 2007, http://www.religioustolerance.org/wic_afri.htm.
- 37 As we shall see, this was the general consensus of most in New England just after the trials ended, so it would seem hard to argue with that statement.
- 38 Elaine G. Breslaw, *Tituba Reluctant Witch of Salem, Devilish Indians and Puritan Fantasies* (New York and London: New York University Press, 1996), 91.
- 39 Ibid.
- 40 Ibid. This page generally addresses the issue of some people being experts in white magic, calling them “cunning folk”.
- 41 Cotton Mather, *Wonders*, 96.
- 42 Ibid.
- 43 Ibid, 15. “These our poor Afflicted Neighbours, quickly after they become *Infected* and *Infested* with these *Dcemons*, arrive to a Capacity of Discerning those which they conceive the *Shapes* of

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their Troublers; and notwithstanding the Great and Just Suspicion, that the *Dcemons* might Impose the *Shapes* of Innocent Persons in their *Spectral Exhibitions* upon the Sufferers, (which may perhaps prove no small part of the *Witch-Plot* in the issue) yet many of the Persons thus Represented, being Examined, several of them have been Convicted of a very Damnable *Witchcraft*: yea, more than One *Twenty* have *Confessed*, that they have Signed unto a *Book*, which the Devil show'd them, and Engaged hi his Hellish Design of *Bewitching*, and *Ruining* our Land. *We* know not, at least / know not, how far the *Delusions* of Satan may be Interwoven into some Circumstances of the *Confessions*;"

- 44 Hansen, *Witchcraft*, x. “. . . [W]itchcraft actually did exist and was widely practiced in seventeenth-century New England It worked then as it works now in witchcraft societies like those of the West Indies, through psychogenic rather than occult means, commonly producing hysterical symptoms as a result of the victim’s fear, and sometimes, when fear was succeeded by a profound sense of hopelessness, even producing death.”
- 45 Ibid, 70 -71, 86.
- 46 Ibid, 86.
- 47 See Boyer and Nissenbaum, eds., *The Salem Witchcraft Papers*. “Candy Negro: for bewitching Mary Wallcott Billa Vera,*Robert Payne foreman. Ponet Se. The juery find the person hereinditted not gilty of this indittement.” and “Candy Negro: for bewitching Ann Putnum Billa Vera, *Robert Payne foreman Ponet Se. The juery find the person here inditted not gilty of this indittement”.
- 48 Douglas O. Linder, “Chronology of Events Relating to the Salem Witchcraft Trials”, Famous American Trials Salem Witchcraft Trials 1692 from University of Missouri-Kansas City School of Law, http://www.law.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/salem/ASAL_CH.HTM (accessed January 19, 2009).
- 49 Linder, “Chronology”, http://www.law.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/salem/ASAL_CH.HTM.
- 50 Ibid.
- 51 Ibid.

- 52 Ibid.
- 53 Ibid.
- 54 Ibid.
- 55 Wikipedia contributors, "Elizabeth Proctor," Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia, http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Elizabeth_Proctor&oldid=264158951 (accessed January 19, 2009).
- 56 Linder, "Chronology", http://www.law.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/salem/ASAL_CH.HTM.
- 57 Ibid.
- 58 Ibid.
- 59 Rosenthal, *Salem Story*, 156-158.
- 60 Ibid. 158
- 61 Ibid. 152.
- 62 Max Blumenthal, "The Witch Hunter Anoints Sarah Palin," The Nation, September 24, 2008, http://www.thenation.com/blogs/state_of_change/363724/the_witch_hunter_anoints_sarah_palin.
- 63 Ibid.
- 64 See Wikipedia contributors, "Bob Larson," *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*, http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Bob_Larson&oldid=266152318 (accessed January 25, 2009). Larson is just one example of a person in the modern western world who believes that there is an active battle between good and evil, God and Satan, true religion and the occult. Although the people who typically follow Larson are in the minority, he does have followers and his views extend beyond his group and one's like it.
- 65 This, of course, is complete bull shit. But I would submit to you that many feel that this is the case.
- 66 Breslaw, *Tituba*, 76-77.
- 67 See Boyer and Nissenbaum, eds., *The Salem Witchcraft Papers*. In volume 3 under the warrant for Tituba and Sarah Osborne it reads in part "and titibe an Indian Woman servant, of mr. Sam'l parris of s'd place also; for Suspition of Witchcraft . . ."

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- 68 For example, see Hamilton Wright Mabie, *Noble Living and Grand Achievement: Giants of the Republic, Embracing the Lives, Deeds, and Personal Traits of Eminent Statesmen, Great Generals, Noted Reformers, Successful Men of Business, Distinguished Literary Men, and Famous Women* (Philadelphia: Chicago: Syracuse: Toronto: J.C. Winston & co, 1896) available at <http://books.google.com>, 606. Mabie wrote “One curious outcome of slavery in Massachusetts was that from the gross superstition of a negro slave, Tituba, first sprang the hideous delusions of the Salem witchcraft trials.” This sentence, of course, could not be more inaccurate. The view that Tituba was only half African was more popular. For one example see George Bancroft, *History of the United States of America, from the Discovery of the Continent* (D. Appelton and Company, 1888) available at <http://books.google.com>, 59. Bancroft wrote “. . . Tituba, a half Indian, half negro female servant who had practiced some wild incantations, being betrayed by her husband, was scourged by Parris, her master, into confessing herself a witch.” This book will also address of the other inaccurate statements that were made in that sentence.
- 69 Breslaw, *Tituba*, 11-13. Other sections of the book also address this question and make a strong argument that she was in fact an Indian and was not even partly African. She was not the first to make this argument. However, thanks to her research I think any sensible person would consider this a closed question.
- 70 Ibid.
- 71 Ibid, 103.S
- 72 See Boyer and Nissenbaum, eds., *The Salem Witchcraft Papers vol 3*. Under “Summary of Examinations of Tituba, Sarah Good, and Sarah Osborne” it is recorded “Sarah Good Sarah Osborne and Tituba an Indian Woman all of Salem Village Being this day brought before us upon Suspition of Witchcraft &c by them and Every one of them Committed. tituba an Indian Woman acknowledging the matter of fact.”
- 73 See Rosenthal, *Salem Story*, 3. He makes a similar point about the initial accusations against Tituba, Good, and Osborne he wrote “[h]ad matters proceeded in traditional ways, judicial verdicts

would have been rendered, guilty or innocent, and the episode would have ended.” Tituba, given her confession, would likely have been convicted. However, even that was not a guarantee as the Puritans accepted the notion that the Devil could delude a person into thinking that she was guilty even if she was not.

74 Ibid. 31.

75 See Cotton Mather, *MEMORABLE PROVIDENCES, RELATING TO WITCHCRAFTS AND POSSESSIONS* (Boston, 1689) available at http://www.law.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/salem/asa_math.htm. The website contains an unfortunate quote that implies that Mather’s interest in witchcraft cases was related to his sexuality.

76 Ibid.

77 Ibid. “Sect. III. About Midsummer, in the year 1688, the Eldest of these Children, who is a Daughter, saw cause to examine their Washerwoman, upon their missing of some Linnen ‘ which twas fear’d she had stollen from them; and of what use this linnen might bee to serve the Witchcraft intended, the Theef’s Tempter knows! This Laundress was the Daughter of an ignorant and a scandalous old Woman in the Neighbourhood;”

78 Ibid. “Sect. IV. It was not long before one of her Sisters, an two of her Brothers, were seized, in Order one after another with Affects’ like those that molested her. Within a fe weeks, they were all four tortured every where in a manner s very grievous, that it would have broke an heart of stone t have seen their Agonies. Skilful Physicians were consulted for their Help, and particularly our worthy and prudent Friend Dr. Thomas Oakes,’ who found himself so affronted by the Dist’empers of the children, that he concluded nothing but an hellish Witchcraft could be the Original of these Maladies.”

79 Ibid. “Sect. VI. It was a Religious Family that these Afflictions happened unto; and none but a Religious Contrivance to obtain Releef, would have been welcome to them. Many superstitious proposals were made unto them, by persons that were I know not who, nor what, with Arguments fetch’t from I know not how much Necessity and Experience; but the distressed Parents rejected all

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such counsils, with a gracious Resolution, to oppose Devils with no other weapons but Prayers and Tears, unto Him that has the Chaining of them; and to try first whether Graces were not the best things to encounter Witchcrafts with.”

- 80 Ibid. “Accordingly they requested the four Ministers of Boston, with the Minister of Chai-Istown, to keep a Day of Prayer at their thus haunted house; which they did in the Company of some devout people there. Immediately upon this Day, the youngest of the four children was delivered, and never felt any trouble as afore.”
- 81 Ibid. “Sect. VII. The Report of the Calamities of the Family for which we were thus concerned arrived now unto the ears of the Magistrates, who presently and prudent y apply’d themselves, with a just vigour, to enquire into the story. The Father of the Children complained of his Neighbour, the suspected ill woman, whose name was Glover; and she being sent for by the Justices, gave such a wretched Account of her self, that they saw cause to commit her unto the Gaolers Custody. Goodwin had no proof that could have done her any Hurt; but the Hag had not power to deny her interest in the Enchantment of the Children; ”
- 82 Ibid. “This Laundress was the Daughter of an ignorant and a scandalous old Woman in the Neighbourhood; whose miserable Husband before he died, had sometimes complained of her, that she was undoubtedly a Witch . . .”
- 83 Ibid.
- 84 Ibid. “I suppose, used upon her, by one or some of her Cruel the Court could receive Answers from her in one but the Irish, which was her Native Language; altho she under-stood the English very well, and had accustomed her whole Family to none but that Language in her former Conversation;”
- 85 Ibid. “[T]he Communication between the Bench and the Bar, was now cheefly convey’d by two honest and faithful men that were interpreters.”
- 86 Ibid. “It was long before she could with any direct Answers plead unto her Indictment and; when she did plead, it was with Confession rather than Denial of her Guilt.”

- 87 Ibid.
- 88 Ibid. “When these were produced, the vile Woman acknowledged, that her way to torment the Objects of her malice, was by wetting of her Finger with her Spittle, and streaking of those little Images.”
- 89 Ibid. “However to make all clear, The Court appointed five or six Physicians one evening to examine her very strictly, whether she were not craz’d in her Intellectuals, and had not procured to her self by Folly and Madness the Reputation of a Witch. Diverse hours did they spend with her; and in all that while no Discourse came from her, but what was pertinent and agreeable: particularly, when they asked her, What she thought would become of her soul? she reply’d “You ask me, a very solemn Question, and I cannot well tell what to say to it.” She own’d her self a Roman Catholick; and could recite her Pater Noster in Latin very readily; but there was one Clause or two alwaies too hard for her, whereof she said, “ She could not repeat it, if she might have all the world.” In the up-shot, the Doctors returned her Compos Mentis; and Sentence of Death was pass’d upon her.”
- 90 Robert Calef, a critic of the Mather’s, also wrote about this trial in 1700. See Robert Calef, *More Wonders of the Invisible World: Or The Wonders of the Invisible World Displayed. In Five Parts* (London, 1700 and Salem: John D. and T. C. Cushing, Jr. for Cushing and Appleton, 1823) available at <http://books.google.com>, 299. Calef wrote “In the times of sir Edmond Andres’s government, goody Glover, a despised, crazy, ill-conditioned old woman, an Irish Roman Catholic, was tried for afflicting Goodwin’s children; by the account of which trial, taken in short hand for the use of the jury, it may appear that the generality of her answers were nonsense, and her behaviour like that of one distracted. Yet the doctors, finding her as she had been for many years, brought her in compos mentis ; and setting aside her crazy answers to some ensnaring questions, the proof against her was wholly deficient. The jury brought her in guilty. Mr. Cotton Mather was the most active and forward of any minister in the country in those matters, taking home one of the children, and managing such intrigues with that child, and printing such an

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account of the whole in his Memorable Providences, as conducted much to the kindling of those flames, that in sir William's time threatened the destruction of this country." While Calef's spin on these events has been accepted as fact by many, it must be remembered that he was already known as an infamous liar who had spread stories that wrongly suggested Cotton and Increase Mather sexually molested teenage girls. See Hansen, *Witchcraft*, 190-194.

- 91 Cotton Mather, *Memorable Providences*. "Sect. X. While the miserable old Woman was under Condemnation, I did my self twice give a visit unto her. She never denyed the guilt of the Witchcraft charg'd upon her; but she confessed very little about the Circumstances of her Confederacies with the Devils; only, she said, That she us'd to be at meetings, which her Prince and Four more were present at. As for those Four, She told who they were; and for her Prince, her account plainly was, that he was the Devil. She entertained me with nothing but Irish ' , which Language I had not Learning enough to understand without an Interpreter; only one time, when I was representing unto her That and How her Prince had cheated her, as her self would quickly find; she reply'd, I think in English, and with passion too, "If it be so, I am sorry for that!" I offer'd many Questions unto her, unto which, after long silence, she told me, She would fain give me a full Answer, but they would not give her leave. It was demanded, "They! Who is that They ? " and she return'd, that They were her Spirits, or her Saints, (for they say, the same Word in Irish signifies both). And at another time, she included her two Mistresses, as she call'd them in that They, but when it was enquired, Who those two were, she fell into, a Rage, and would be no more urged. I Sett before her the Necessity and Equity of her breaking her Covenant with Hell, and giving her self to the Lord Jesus Christ, by an everlasting Covenant; To which her Answer was, that I spoke a very Reasonable thing, but she could not do it. I asked her whether she would consent or desire to be pray'd for; To that she said, If Prayer would do her any good, shee could pray for her self. And when it was again propounded, she said, She could not unless her spirits (or angels) would give her leave.

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However, against her will I pray'd with her, which if it were a Fault it was in excess of Pitty. When I had done, shee thank'd me with many good Words; but I was no sooner out of her sight, than she took a stone, a long and slender stone, and with her Finger and Spittle fell to tormenting it; though whom or what she meant, I had the mercy never to understand."

- 92 Ibid. "she said, the Children should not be relieved by her Death, for others had a hand in it as well as she; and she named one among the rest, whom it might have been thought Natural Affection would have advised the Concealing of." Perhaps she named her daughter?
- 93 For an example of this view see Increase Mather, *Cases of Conscience concerning evil SPIRITS Personating Men, Witchcrafts, infallible Proofs of Guilt in such as are accused with that Crime. All Considered according to the Scriptures, History, Experience, and the Judgment of many Learned men* (Boston, 1693) available in Cotton Mather's *Wonders* at <http://books.google.com> at page 266. "If the Testimony of a bewitched or possessed Person, is of validity as to what they see done to themselves, then it is so as to others, whom they see afflicted no less than themselves: But what they affirm concerning others, is not to be taken for Evidence. Whence had they this Supernatural Sight? It must needs be either from Heaven or from Hell: If from Heaven, (as Elidia's Servant, and Halaam's Ass could discern Angels) let their Testimony be received: But if they had this Knowledge from Hell, tho' there may possibly be truth in what they affirm, they are not legal Witnesses: For the Law of God allows of no Revelation from any other Spirit but himself, Isa. 8. 19. It is a Sin against God to make use of the Devil's help to know that which cannot be otherwise known;" Increase Mather was generally seen as more conservative in his opinions of the witchcraft trials and was troubled by the Salem trials. If Increase Mather's views had been prevailed at Salem then the witchcraft trials would have been much more limited.
- 94 Cotton Mather, *Memorable Providences*.
- 95 *ibid.*

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- 96 Ibid.
- 97 Ibid. “[F]or we should be tender in such Relations lest we wrong the Reputation of the Innocent by stories not enough enquired into.”
- 98 See Exod 22:18 “Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live.”
- 99 King William’s War and especially King Philip’s War had been devastating to the population. See Wikipedia contributors, “King William’s War,” *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*, http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=King_William%27s_War&oldid=262940995 (accessed January 27, 2009). And see Wikipedia contributors, “King Philip’s War,” *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*, http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=King_Philip%27s_War&oldid=266038127 (accessed January 27, 2009). These Wikipedia Entries should provide additional resources for information on these conflicts.
- 100 See Breslaw, *Tituba*, 95. “The Reverend Parris thus followed orthodox procedure when he initiated a series of prayers and made arrangements for a fast day for the community to repent of its collective sins. He knew of Cotton Mather’s widely publicized success in exorcising the devils in the four Goodwin children just a few years before and employed the same rituals of prayer, calls for repentance, and tender loving care of the victims. . . . Neither Parris’s prayers nor her mother’s and Tituba’s care and concern seemed to help.”
- 101 Ibid. 89.
- 102 See Wm. Thaddeus Harris, trans., *Salem Village Church Record Book* available at <http://etext.lib.virginia.edu/salem/witchcraft/villgchurchrcrd.html>. “Nay it never broke forth to any considerable light, untill Diabolical means was used by the making of a Cake by my Indian man, who had his direction from this our sister Mary Sibly”. These remarks from Parris were given on March 27, 1692.
- 103 See John Hale, *A Modest Inquiry Into The Nature Of Witchcraft* (1702) available at <http://etext.virginia.edu/etcbin/toccer-new2?id=Bur6Nar.sgm&images=images/modeng&data=/texts/english/modeng/parsed&tag=public&part=6&division=div1>.

“This the Neighbours quickly took up, and concluded they were bewitched. He had also an Indian Man servant, and his Wife who afterwards confessed, that without the knowledge of their Master or Mistress, they had taken some of the Afflicted persons Urine, and mixing it with meal had made a Cake, and baked it, to find out the Witch, as they said. After this, the Afflicted persons cryed out of the Indian Woman, named Tituba, that she did pinch, prick, and grievously torment them, and that they saw her here and there, where no body else could.”

104 Breslaw, *Tituba*, 96-97. Indeed, if Tituba really was afflicting the children she most certainly would not have instigated the use of this magic. It seems more likely that as a slave she felt pressured to help by this neighbor.

105 See note 103.

106 Hale, *A Modest Inquiry*. “In a short time after other persons who were of age to be witnesses, were molested by Satan, and in their fits cryed out upon Tituba and Goody O. and S. G.389 that they or Specters in their Shapes did grievously torment them;” Also see the quote from Hale in note 104.

107 Ibid. “[T]he effect of which examination was, that Tituba confessed she was a Witch, and that she with the two others accused did torment and bewitch the com-plainers,”

108 See Boyer and Nissenbaum, eds., *The Salem Witchcraft Papers vol 2*. Under Examinations of Sarah Good, Sarah Osborne, and Tituba, it is recorded that Osborne “saith she had noe hand in hurting the children nether by hur self by in strements she saith that shee saith that [shee] was more lickley beewicht then a wichshee said shee would never beeleave the devell, the devell did propound to hur that shee should never goe to meting noe more and att that time nothing was suggested to hur elces Why did she pinch the young woaman shee never did nor dont know who did.”

109 Ibid. “she saith itt was nott she itt is gamer osborne that doth pinch and afflicht the children.”

110 Breslaw, *Tituba*, 183.

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111 Ibid.

112 Hansen, *Witchcraft*, 30. Hansen quotes John Hale, but comments in his footnote that this was not published in a re-print of Hale's work. This author is relying on Hansen's source as he is unable to verify this on his own.

113 Breslaw, *Tituba*, 93.

114 See note 69 for example. Also see Breslaw, *Tituba*, 97. "It is unlikely that Tituba as an individual was actually known for her skill in white or black magic before 1692. There is no evidence (except in the imaginations of historians, playwrights, and novelists) that she was an active participant in occult rituals before that date." Of course, her confession was evidence of some occult activities before 1692. But there is no evidence of her teaching fortune telling or anything else to anyone in Salem Village.

115 See notes 38-42 for more information on English folk magic.

116 For example see *Witchcraft, African and European*, <http://khanya.wordpress.com/2008/04/06/witchcraft-african-and-european/>. "Premodern European beliefs about witchcraft and premodern African ideas about witchcraft are in many respects very similar."

117 Although he was not a credible source, it is worth noting that Robert Calef alleged this. See Calef, *More Wonders*, 189. "The account she since gives of it is, that her master did beat her, and other ways abuse her, to make her confess and accuse (such as he called) her sister-witches". There is nothing to contradict this claim. It will be accepted as true for the sake of this argument. If not true, then the argument presented is only stronger.

118 Cotton Mather, *Wonders*, 31.

119 For example, see Rowland Hussey Allen, *The New-England Tragedies in Prose* (Boston: Nichols and Noyes, 1869) available at <http://books.google.com>, 107.

120 See Boyer and Nissenbaum, eds., *The Salem Witchcraft Papers vol 1*. Under "Physical Examinations of George Burroughs and George Jacobs, Jr." it is asserted that Jacobs may have had a

witch's mark. Under "Physical Examination of Bridget Bishop, Rebecca Nurse, Elizabeth Proctor, Alice Parker, Susannah Martin, and Sarah Good" it is noted that Bishop, Nurse, and Proctor had marks as well. The reliability of this test must be questioned as Burroughs and Good, who were almost certainly witches, did not have the mark, while Nurse and Proctor, who were almost certainly innocent, did.

- 121 See note 118.
- 122 Torture was used during the Salem witchcraft trials, but it was not widely or harshly used. This section of the book is meant to be a bit facetious. See Hansen, *Witchcraft*, 133-135 for a discussion of torture, how its use compared to the harsh tortures used in Europe, except England, and why torture cannot explain the events at Salem as most allegations and confessions were given freely.
- 123 Calef, *More Wonders*, 214-216.
- 124 Ibid.
- 125 Ibid.
- 126 Hansen, *Witchcraft*, 133-135. On page 133, Hansen wrote "The issue of torture, which Procter raises, is one that needs to be considered here. Cotton Mather had declared against it in his letter to Richards, calling it 'un-English,' and it is true that neither English nor New English law sanctioned it. The latter expressly forbade it, except for extorting the names of accomplices from convicted criminals, and even in that case it forbade 'such tortures as be barbarous and inhumane.'"
- 127 Ibid.
- 128 See Boyer and Nissenbaum, eds., *The Salem Witchcraft Papers vol 2*. Under Samuel Sibley v. John Proctor, Sibley states about Proctor's treatment of his servant, Mary Warren, "Proctor replied he was going to fetch home his jade he left her there last night & had rather given 40d than let her come up sd Sibly askt why he talt so Proctor replied if they were let alone so we should all be Devils & witches quickly they should rather be had to the Whipping post but he would fetch his jade Home & thresh the

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Devil out of her & more to the like purpose crying hang them, hang them. And also added that when she was first taken with fits he kept her close to the Wheel & threatened to thresh her, & then she had no-684-more fits till the next day he was gone forth, & then she must have her fits again firsooth &.”

129 Breslaw, *Tituba*, 139.

130 See Andrew Sullivan, “Bush’s torturers follow where the Nazis led,” *The Sunday Times* (London), Comment/Columnists, October 7, 2007, http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/comment/columnists/andrew_sullivan/article2602564.ece. “Classic torture techniques, such as waterboarding, hypothermia, beatings, excruciating stress positions, days and days of sleep deprivation, and threats to family members (even the children of terror suspects), were approved by Bush and inflicted on an unknown number of terror suspects by American officials, CIA agents . . .” Also see American Civil Liberties Union, “ACLU and Human Rights First Sue Defense Secretary Rumsfeld Over U.S. Torture Policies,” Press Release, March 1, 2005, <http://www.aclu.org/safefree/general/17594prs20050301.html>. “Those techniques [personally approved by then Defense Secretary Rumsfeld] included the use of “stress positions,” 20-hour interrogations, the removal of clothing, the use of dogs, isolation, and sensory deprivation.” The Bush administration used stress techniques and threats to uncover terrorists while the authorities at Salem used similar techniques to uncover witches. Neither the Bush regime or the Massachusetts authorities intended to cause serious harm or to inflict extreme pain.

131 See Associated Press, “Bush Defends Policy on Terror Detainees,” November 7, 2005, <http://www.foxnews.com/story/0,2933,174764,00.html>. President George W. Bush stated “We do not torture.”

132 See United States Criminal Code TITLE 18, PART I, CHAPTER 113C, at http://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/18/usc_sup_01_18_10_I_20_113C.html. Under § 2340. Definitions: “As used in this chapter—(1) “torture” means an act committed by a person acting under the color of law specifically intended to inflict severe physical or mental pain or suffering (other than pain or suffering incidental to lawful

sanctions) upon another person within his custody or physical control;(2) “severe mental pain or suffering” means the prolonged mental harm caused by or resulting from—(A) the intentional infliction or threatened infliction of severe physical pain or suffering;(B) the administration or application, or threatened administration or application, of mind-altering substances or other procedures calculated to disrupt profoundly the senses or the personality;(C) the threat of imminent death; or (D) the threat that another person will imminently be subjected to death, severe physical pain or suffering, or the administration or application of mind-altering substances or other procedures calculated to disrupt profoundly the senses or personality; and(3) “United States” means the several States of the United States, the District of Columbia, and the commonwealths, territories, and possessions of the United States.” Under § 2340A. Torture: “(a) Offense.—Whoever outside the United States commits or attempts to commit torture shall be fined under this title or imprisoned not more than 20 years, or both, and if death results to any person from conduct prohibited by this subsection, shall be punished by death or imprisoned for any term of years or for life.(b) Jurisdiction.—There is jurisdiction over the activity prohibited in subsection (a) if—(1) the alleged offender is a national of the United States; or(2) the alleged offender is present in the United States, irrespective of the nationality of the victim or alleged offender.(c) Conspiracy.—A person who conspires to commit an offense under this section shall be subject to the same penalties (other than the penalty of death) as the penalties prescribed for the offense, the commission of which was the object of the conspiracy.”

133 Ibid. Although the Conspiracy charge would probably be more appropriate for persons who were not personally present when the torture was taking place. A conviction for conspiracy to torture alone could not carry the death penalty. But if the victim died it could carry life in prison.

134 Hansen, *Witchcraft*, 133-135.

135 There is nothing in any document nor are there any claims that survive of witch dunking in the Salem episode. This does not stop people from suggesting that it happened. For example, one

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columnist writing about the Bush regime's policy on torture wrote "Variations of water boarding have their patriotic histories too. In the Salem Witch trials, one technique was to put a suspected witch in the lake – if they floated, they were considered guilty. I can see why George would get behind this – its simple and the result is clear." Christopher Wright, "Waterboarding's Long History," OpEdNews, December 20, 2007, http://www.opednews.com/articles/opedne_christop_071220_waterboarding_s_long.htmhttp://www.opednews.com/articles/opedne_christop_071220_waterboarding_s_long.htm.

Witch dunking likely occurred around the same time in Fairfield, in what is now Connecticut. The local ministers were asked their opinions. Apparently the water test was used and the ministers agreed that it was not only unreliable, but "unlawful and sinful." No one was executed as a result of the 1692 trials in Fairfield. See as quoted in John Metcalf Taylor, *The Witchcraft Delusion in Colonial Connecticut, 1647-1697*, (New York: The Grafton Press, 1908) 75-78.

- 136 Dunking was never a legal practice in New England. See Hansen, *Witchcraft*, 49. There appear to be two different forms of witch dunking. The first involves throwing the alleged witch into a body of water. If she floated she was a witch. If she sank she was innocent and the mob will rush to save her. Dunking could also be used as a torture method, attaching a person to a chair and submerging the person in water until she confessed. A person could be held under for long amounts of time in order to simulate drowning and to shock the body. This may drive a person to confess. There is no evidence to suggest that this extreme form of torture was used in New England. It is likely that even the most conservative Puritans would have disapproved of this torture.
- 137 See Boyer and Nissenbaum, eds., *The Salem Witchcraft Papers vol 3*. Both transcripts and most other relevant documents are located under "Case 13 Tituba".
- 138 Ibid. Under "Summary of Examinations of Tituba, Sarah Good, and Sarah Osborne" It is recorded in part that "Salem Village

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March 1st 1691 Titiba an Indian Woman brought before us by Const^r Jos Herrick of Salem upon Suspition of Witchcraft. . .”, “Salem March 2^d Sarah Osburne againe Examined and also titiba as will appear in their Examinations given in titiba againe acknowledged the fact. . .”, “Salem March 3^d Sarah Osburn and titiba Indian againe Examined”, “Salem March 5th Sarah Good and titiba againe Examined. & in there Examination titiba acknowledged the same she did formerly and accused the other two-aboves^d --titiba againe s^d the same.”

- 139 The statements made about the examination of Tituba all come from the transcripts in *The Salem Witchcraft Papers*.
- 140 Breslaw, *Tituba*, 35. “By 1679 the island began to undergo a change in its racial composition. The 21,725 Europeans counted that year were now outnumbered by 32,473 Africans, almost all slaves. The number of Indians, who were probably all enslaved, is not known, but by the 1670s could never have been more than 0.2 percent of the total.”
- 141 Graham Hancock is an excellent source of information for this controversial subject. For an easy introduction to this theory see Graham Hancock, “Shamanism Aliens & Ayahuasca” Coast to Coast radio interview, September 28, 2006 available at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dzKp2PeXeWI>. At the end of Part I he addresses the difference between a shaman and a shaman who has “gone bad” and become a “sorcerer”.
- 142 See Breslaw, *Tituba*, 46. “In the absence of Christian instruction or the forced conversions practiced by the Spanish, Barbados slaves followed the religious practices of their own cultures... The African slaves were free to borrow ideas from each other, adapting old traditions to new conditions and possibly retaining elements common to all, while incorporating Amerindian beliefs and European rituals as desired.”

A big similarity is that both Africans and South Americans have been known to use psychedelic “drugs” in their religious ceremonies. A review of the writings of Terrence McKenna, Daniel Pinchbeck, or others associated with this topic would

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show similarities and some differences between these cultures and substances.

- 143 See Linnda R. Caporael, "Ergotism: The Satan Loosed in Salem? Convulsive ergotism may have been a physiological basis for the Salem witchcraft crisis in 1692." *Science*, Vol. 192, April 2, 1976, <http://web.utk.edu/~kstclair/221/ergotism.html>.
- 144 See Cecil Adams, "Were the witches of Salem a result of poisoning with ergot fungus?" *The Straight Dope*, January 14, 2005, <http://www.straightdope.com/columns/read/2579/were-the-witches-of-salem-a-result-of-poisoning-with-ergot-fungus>. "While it's rarely possible to prove or disprove these things conclusively, evidence for the ergotism-made-them-do-it theory is unpersuasive. . . . Doubters were quick to raise objections: Evidence of a cold winter and crop failure is dubious, and none of the accusers displayed the full array of symptoms needed to support a diagnosis of convulsive ergotism. . . . The counterarguments seem to have persuaded most historians, but a credulous 2001 PBS documentary has helped keep conjecture about ergotism alive."
- 145 This book is not designed to be a long philosophical tome about the nature of reality. Nor is this book about science. However, an article about Quantum physics caught my attention when it suggested that reality does not exist, except when we are viewing it. If this is right, then there is no reality and all is fantasy. Is there much difference then between saying that all, including fantasy, is reality and all, including reality, is fantasy? See Jon Cartwright, "Quantum physics says goodbye to reality," *PhysicsWorld.com*, April 20, 2007, <http://physicsworld.com/cws/article/news/27640>. "Now physicists from Austria claim to have performed an experiment that rules out a broad class of hidden-variables theories that focus on realism -- giving the uneasy consequence that reality does not exist when we are not observing it."
- 146 For example, see George Lincoln Burr, ed., *Narratives of the Witchcraft Cases, 1648-1706* (New York: C. Scribner's Sons, 1914), 174-175, available at <http://books.google.com>. Quoting Thomas Brattle, a New England merchant at the time who was critical of the trials, who wrote "The afflicted persons are brought

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into Court; and after much patience and pains taken with them, do take their oaths, that the prisoner at the bar did afflict them: And here I think it very observable, that often, when the afflicted do mean and intend only the appearance and shape of such an one, (say G. Proctour) yet they positively swear that G. Proctour did afflict them; and they have been allowed so to do; as tho' there was no real difference between G. Proctour and the shape of G. Proctour."

147 See Boyer and Nissenbaum, eds., *The Salem Witchcraft Papers vol 3*, under "Examination of Tituba" She said "the man brought her to me and made me pinch her" thus indicating that she had control of her specter.

148 See Samuel Willard, *Some Miscellany Observations on our Present Debates Respecting Witchcrafts, in a Dialogue Between S. & B.* (Philadelphia: William Bradford, 1692) available at <http://www.17thc.us/docs/willard.shtml>. Willard was a Boston minister who opposed the Salem trials. He addressed this debate in this book. "S" represented the views of the minister and judges of Salem. "B" represented his views and the views of other ministers in Boston. He wrote:

S. Do you not believe that his Spectre is seen afflicting by the person afflicted?

B. Supposing it; yet it doth not hence follow that he is the Witch.

S. We must grant that it is the Devil in the Spectre; but it is by the Parties consent, and therefore it proves him Guilty.

B. I know you all plead so; and tell us that the Devil cannot represent an Innocent person doing mischief, but never proved it; nor can we believe you.

At least one of the judges of the trials rejected the notion that the devil could use the shape of an innocent person. See Boyer and Nissenbaum, eds., *The Salem Witchcraft Papers vol 2*, under "Examination of George Jacobs, Sr." Jacobs stated "The Devil can taken any likeness" after he was asked why his image afflicted the victims. The response from the examiner was "Not without their consent."

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However, Cotton Mather asserted that the Devil could use the image of another, although he consider it rare. He believed that the appearance of a person's image was cause for more investigation, but was not sufficient for a conviction. See Cotton Mather, *Wonders*, 18. "That the Devils may sometimes have a permission to Represent an Innocent Person, as Tormenting such as are under Diabolical Molestations: But that such things are Rare and Extraordinary." And 28, "Even so a Spectre exactly resembling such or such a Person, when the Neighbourhood are tormented by such Spectres, may reasonably make Magistrates inquisitive whether the Person so represented have done or said any thing that may argue their confederacy with Evil Spirits, altho' it may be defective enough in point of Conviction ; especially at a time, when 'tis possible, some over- powerful Conjuror may have got the skill of thus exhibiting the Shapes of all sorts of Persons, on purpose to stop the Prosecution of the Wretches, whom due Enquiries thus provoked, might have made obnoxious unto Justice."

149 Breslaw, *Tituba*, 175.

150 Ibid.

151 See Calef, *More Wonders*, 189. See note 91 for more information about Calef's credibility, or lack thereof.

152 This represents the most extreme false characterizations of Bishop. For an example of a traditional wrong account of Bishop's life see Karen Zeinert, *The Salem Witchcraft Trials* (New York: London: Toronto: Sydney: Venture, 1989) 50-52 "[s]he and her husband owned two taverns in the area, where laughter and noise continued late into the night. . . . To make matters worse, Bridget was a pretty woman who liked to dress up and show off. She wore red vests and brightly colored dresses trimmed with lace and lots of ribbons. Her garments were quite a contrast to the simple, gray clothing most Puritans thought proper."

153 I realize that many readers will find the use of the word "fag" offensive. My intent is to lighten up the book a little. I do not advocate discrimination against gays. I don't advocate using the word as a slur against gays. I am merely using it in a humorous

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way. I also don't mean to imply that homosexuality didn't exist in colonial New England, but mean to suggest that it certainly was not anything like ancient Greece.

- 154 See Avodah K. Offit, "NEITHER SIN NOR DUTY," *New York Times*, Arts, March 16, 1986, available at <http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=9A0DEFDA143CF935A25750C0A960948260>. Reviewing *THE PURITAN CONSCIENCE AND MODERN SEXUALITY* by Edmund Leites, the writer notes "In "The Puritan Conscience and Modern Sexuality," Edmund Leites tells us that a popular misconception of religious history holds the Puritans to have believed sex should be repressed if not extinguished. Most Americans, as well as the German sociologist Max Weber, whose views Mr. Leites more specifically rejects, have viewed the Puritans as harsh ascetics who procreated more by unfortunate accident than design, and, like Cotton Mather, only wrote about sex to drive lust from their hearts. Mr. Leites argues that Puritan sexuality in 17th- and 18th-century England occupied some sedate middle ground between Calvinist hell and a joyous agnostic anarchy. "Sex was not simply for procreation or to avoid fornication but was good itself to the degree that it gave pleasure to both husband and wife."
- 155 Perhaps not the best reference, but this book is not focused on Puritan attitudes toward sex, see The Puritan Scene, "Christian History" http://www.christianchronicler.com/history1/puritan_scene.html. "In spite of popular mythology, the Puritans respected a healthy sexuality and saw human sexual relationships as normal unless they became obsessive. They punished illegitimacy albeit gently. When a girl conceived out of wedlock, Puritans generally tried to establish a family. Pregnancies often resulted from the Puritans' curious custom of "bundling." Bundling allowed a courting couple to sleep together in the girl's home provided they were individually bundled."
- 156 See Samuel Sewall, *Diary of Samuel Sewall: 1674-1729. v.1[-3]* (Boston: Massachusetts Historical Society, 1882) available at <http://books.google.com>, 364. Sewall, one of the witch trial judges, and a Puritan clearly drank alcohol as most would have too. On this page he notes "After the Funeral, Many of the

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Council, went and wish'd Col. Fitch Joy of his daughter Martha's Marriage with Mr. James Allen.1 Had good Bride-Cake, good Wine, Burgundy and Canary, good Beer, Oranges, Pears."

- 157 See Rosenthal, *Salem Story*, 71 – 85. Rosenthal credits David L. Greene with clarifying the situation with Bishop in 1981. Bridget Bishop was confused with Sarah Bishop, who was not executed. This mistake was apparently made in the records at the time at the trials. However, there is no reason to think that the judges were confused with her identity.
- 158 A quick internet search of “Bridget Bishop” and “tavern” will produce many websites that continue to get this confused. The Wikipedia page for Bishop was wrong until this author corrected it.
- 159 See note 153 for just one example.
- 160 See Boyer and Nissenbaum, eds., *The Salem Witchcraft Papers vol 1*, under Indictment v. Bridget Bishop, No. 1. It clearly charges Bishop with practicing witchcraft “within the Township of Salem.” However, in volume 3, under “Indictment v. Tituba” it clearly charges that she practiced her witchcraft in the “Towne of Salem Village.” Salem Village was next to Salem Town and they were still technically part of the same political unit. But the people at the time recognized the difference between the two.
- 161 Rosenthal, *Salem Story*, 82.
- 162 Ibid, 74.
- 163 Dorothy A. Mays, *Women in Early America: Struggle, Survival, and Freedom in a New World* (ABC-CLIO, 2004) 318.
- 164 Boyer and Nissenbaum, eds., *The Salem Witchcraft Papers vol 1*, under Samuel Gray v. Bridget Bishop.
- 165 Ibid, under John Louder v. Bridget Bishop.
- 166 Ibid, under John Cook v. Bridget Bishop.
- 167 Ibid, under Richard Coman v. Bridget Bishop.
- 168 Ibid, under William Stacy v. Bridget Bishop.
- 169 A quick internet search of the term will reveal many articles about this condition. Also, there are various web videos that can be found on <http://www.google.com>. For one example of

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an article on this see William Dement, "SLEEP PARALYSIS" updated January 26, 1999, visited February 10, 2009, at <http://www.stanford.edu/~dement/paralysis.html>. "In some cases, when hypnogogic hallucinations are present, people feel that someone is in the room with them, some experience the feeling that someone or something is sitting on their chest and they feel impending death and suffocation. That has been called the "Hag Phenomena" and has been happening to people over the centuries. These things cause people much anxiety and terror, but there is no physical harm." Of course, if one had a weak heart it is not hard to imagine that the victim could be harmed physically.

- 170 Ibid. Of course, it is possible that what is seen is actually real and that the dreamer is merely waking up to another dimension where his worst fears are reality. However, since Bishop was convicted and executed for her crimes this chapter will focus more on the strength of traditional evidence. It is fine to speculate about Tituba and reality, but the law should focus more on our present reality as it is more concrete.
- 171 Ibid. Reducing stress is one of the recommendations from Dr. William Dement on how to reduce the likelihood of experiencing this horrible thing again.
- 172 See Chris Mooney, "Waking Up to Sleep Paralysis," The Committee for Skeptical Inquiry, April 13, 2005, at <http://www.csicop.org/doubtandabout/sleep/>. "When it comes to "alien abduction" claims and any number of other sleep-related "paranormal" encounters--whether with ghosts, vampires, werewolves, or whatever else-- skeptics have long suspected the existence of a simple, overarching explanation. And now a string of papers by scientists at Harvard University, the latest of which was published by *Transcultural Psychiatry* in March, bolster the notion that such stories can be traced back to the common experience known as sleep paralysis, and the hallucinations that sometimes accompany it. . . . Moreover, as cultural notions shift over time, we can expect that the apparitions hallucinated during sleep paralysis will also shift their identities in relation to societal and media cues."

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- 173 Cotton Mather, *Wonders*, 30.
- 174 American Antiquarian Society, *Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society* (Worcester, American Antiquarian Society, 1911) 203-204.
- 175 Cotton Mather, *Wonders*, 30.
- 176 Ibid.
- 177 Ibid, 276.
- 178 Ibid, 33.
- 179 Boyer and Nissenbaum, eds., *Salem-village Witchcraft: A Documentary Record of Local Conflict in Colonial New England* (University Press of New England, 1993) 157.-158.
- 180 Ibid.
- 181 As discussed, Bishop was from Salem Town, while the initial accusers were from Salem Village. It is likely that Bishop had never even set foot in Salem Village before. When questioned by the judges in Salem Village as to why she afflicted children there she stated “I never saw these persons before, nor I never was in this place before.” See Boyer and Nissenbaum, eds., *The Salem Witchcraft Papers vol 1*, under Examination of Bridget Bishop, First Version.
- 182 Boyer and Nissenbaum, eds., *The Salem Witchcraft Papers vol 1* under Case Bridget Bishop Executed, June 10, 1692.
- 183 Ibid.
- 184 See George Lincoln Burr, ed., *Narratives of the Witchcraft Cases, 1648-1706* (New York: C. Scribner’s Sons, 1914), 187-188, available at <http://books.google.com>. Quoting Thomas Brattle “Many of these afflicted persons, who have scores of strange fitts in a day, yet in the intervals of time are hale and hearty, robust and lusty, as tho’ nothing had afflicted them. I Remember that when the chief Judge gave the first Jury their charge, he told them, that they were not to mind whether the bodies of the said afflicted were really pined and consumed, as was expressed in the inditement; but whether the said afflicted did not suffer from the accused such afflictions as naturally *tended* to their being

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pined and consumed, wasted, etc. This, (said he,) is a pining and consuming in the sense of the law. I add not.”

- 185 See Hansen, *Witchcraft*, 81- 83. This section of the book deals with deaths caused by witchcraft. Hansen believed it was possible to kill a person through witchcraft, if the victim believed that it was possible, and he cited examples, including some that would have been known to the Salem judges.
- 186 Boyer and Nissenbaum, eds., *The Salem Witchcraft Papers vol 1* under Examination of Bridget Bishop, First Version.
- 187 Ibid.
- 188 Ibid.
- 189 Ibid.
- 190 Ibid.
- 191 Ibid.
- 192 Ibid.
- 193 Ibid.
- 194 Ibid, Examination of Bridget Bishop, Second Version.
- 195 Ibid.
- 196 Ibid.
- 197 Ibid, Examination of Bridget Bishop, First Version.
- 198 See note 149.
- 199 Cotton Mather, *Wonders*, 31.
- 200 Boyer and Nissenbaum, eds., *The Salem Witchcraft Papers vol 1* Physical Examination of Bridget Bishop, Rebecca Nurse, Elizabeth Proctor, Alice Parker, Susannah Martin, and Sarah Good, No. 1.
- 201 Ibid, Physical Examination, No. 2.
- 202 For example, John Proctor, who was executed for witchcraft did not have a mark that could be found. See Boyer and Nissenbaum, eds., *The Salem Witchcraft Papers vol 2*, under Physical Examination of John Proctor and John Willard. “We whose names under written haveing searched the bodyes of John

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procter sen'r & John Williard now in the Goale & doe not find any thing to farther suspect them”.

- 203 Again see note 94. Increase Mather believed that such evidence from bewitched or possessed persons had no value and should not be used because whatever knowledge they had came from the Devil. “But what they affirm concerning others, is not to be taken for Evidence.” See note 149 for Cotton Mather’s view, quoting Perkins, that the identification of a specter by an afflicted person, while not enough alone for a conviction, does justify further investigation as it is rare that an innocent person is impersonated wrongly by Satan.
- 204 Boyer and Nissenbaum, eds., *The Salem Witchcraft Papers vol 1* under William Stacy v. Bridget Bishop.
- 205 The stereotype, that anyone will hear from the man on the street, is that the accusers were all, or mostly, hysterical girls. This is, of course, wrong.
- 206 Boyer and Nissenbaum, eds., *Salem-village Witchcraft: A Documentary Record of Local Conflict in Colonial New England* (York: University Press of New England, 1993) 159 – 162.
- 207 Boyer and Nissenbaum, eds., *The Salem Witchcraft Papers vol 1* under William Stacy v. Bridget Bishop.
- 208 Hansen, *Witchcraft*, 65.
- 209 Ibid, 66.
- 210 Boyer and Nissenbaum, eds., *The Salem Witchcraft Papers vol 1* under Samuel and Sarah Shattuck v. Bridget Bishop.
- 211 Ibid, under John Louder v. Bridget Bishop.
- 212 Cotton Mather, *Wonders*, 32.
- 213 Hansen, *Witchcraft*, 33.
- 214 Boyer and Nissenbaum, eds., *The Salem Witchcraft Papers vol 1* under John Bly, Sr., and William Bly v. Bridget Bishop.
- 215 Ibid, John Bly, Sr. and Rebecca Bly v. Bridget Bishop.
- 216 Breslaw, *Tituba*, 48.
- 217 Hansen, *Witchcraft*, 65.

- 218 Ibid, 80 – 86.
- 219 Cotton Mather, *Wonders*, 137. “To crown all, John Ely and William Ely testify’d, That being employ’d by Bridget Bishop, to help to take down the Cellar-wall of the old House wherein she formerly lived, they did in holes of the said old Wall, find several Poppets, made up of Rags and Hogs-bristles, with headless Pins in them, the Points being outward; whereof she could give no Account unto the Court, that was reasonable or tolerable.”
- 220 Boyer and Nissenbaum, eds., *Salem-village Witchcraft: A Documentary Record of Local Conflict in Colonial New England* (York: University Press of New England, 1993) 155-156.
- 221 See note 94 for Increase Mather’s opinion which concurs with this.
- 222 Boyer and Nissenbaum, eds., *The Salem Witchcraft Papers vol 1* under Deliverance Hobbs v. Bridget Bishop et al. and Mary Warren v. Bridget Bishop and Nathaniel Cary [?].
- 223 Boyer and Nissenbaum, eds., *The Salem Witchcraft Papers vol 1* under Susannah Sheldon v. Bridget Bishop and Elizabeth Hubbard v. Bridget Bishop and Mary Warren.
- 224 Boyer and Nissenbaum, eds., *The Salem Witchcraft Papers vol 1* under John Cook v. Bridget Bishop.
- 225 Cotton Mather does not seem to have questioned it either. See Cotton Mather, *Wonders*, 131.
- 226 See note 158. It is believed that the account of the Reverend John Hale was about Sarah Bishop, not Bridget Bishop.
- 227 Boyer and Nissenbaum, eds., *The Salem Witchcraft Papers vol 1* under Death Warrant v. Bridget Bishop.
- 228 Rosenthal, *Salem Story*, 68.
- 229 See Harris, transc., *Salem Village Church Record Book*, under 1706. Aug. 25. “The confession of Anne Putnam when she was received to communion... I then being in my childhood should by such a providence of God be made an instrument for yt accusing of severall persons of a grievous crime wherby their lives were taken away from them, whom now I have just grounds and good reason to believe they were innocent persons, and yt it was a

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great delusion of Satan yt deceived me in that sad time, whereby I justly fear I have been instrumental with others tho' ignorantly and unwittingly to bring upon myself & this land the guilt of innocent blood Though what was said or done by me against any person I can truly and uprightly say before God & man I did it not out of any anger, malice, or illwill to any person for I had no such thing against one of them; but what I did was ignorantly being deluded by Satan."

- 230 See Wikipedia contributors, "Common law," *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*, http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Common_law&oldid=270804492 (accessed February 15, 2009). This provides general background information about how the law develops and is a good place to start for further research on this aspect of legal history.
- 231 For example, see Rosenthal, *Salem Story*, 180. Rosenthal also quotes Brattle saying that many judges in Boston were unhappy at the trials. It is a fair point. As mentioned above, Massachusetts was not a harsh theocracy with no dissent. It wasn't a theocracy and it was not as harsh as commonly thought. The fact that there was obvious dissent actually lends credibility to the witnesses as the court was willing to believe them despite the fact that some highly respected citizens were opposed to the proceedings.
- 232 Ibid, 233. Rosenthal notes that one source, Boyer and Nissenbaum, state that he resigned between June 10 and June 15. However, another source, Daniel Neal, listed Saltonstall as a judge at George Burrough's trial later that summer. However, Thomas Brattle lists Saltonstall as one of many persons who was very upset with the trials. See Burr, ed., *Narratives of the Witchcraft Cases*, 184. Quoting Brattle, "Major N. Saltonstall, Esq. who was one of the Judges, has left the Court, and is very much dissatisfied with the proceedings of it."
- 233 Hearsay is an out of court statement that is used to prove the truth of the matter asserted. In Shattuck's testimony, for example, he testified that about things that other people had told him as if they were true. Hearsay appears to have been allowed in the proceedings. Still, Shattuck's own observations and the

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observations of his wife, who also testified, may have provided enough evidence to convict. It is unknown if the court heard personally from Shattuck's son who was attacked by Bishop. Perhaps if Shattuck's son had run home after the attack and told his parents of what had happened, his statements could be allowed in a modern court under the excited utterance exception to hearsay. Still, I think that Bishop would now have a Constitution right to confront that witness if his statements were to come into evidence.

- 234 See Rosenthal, *Salem Story*, 87 – 89. Rosenthal discusses the various writers, including Chadwick Hansen who is cited often here, as stating that Good was elderly.
- 235 Ibid.
- 236 Boyer and Nissenbaum, eds., *The Salem Witchcraft Papers vol 2* under Warrant v. Sarah Good and Examination of Sarah Good.
- 237 Ibid, under Examination of Sarah Good.
- 238 Ibid. “I did not mutter but I thanked him for what he gave my child” was her response when asked why she went away muttering from the Parris house after they gave her some charity.
- 239 Hansen, *Witchcraft*, 66.
- 240 Boyer and Nissenbaum, eds., *The Salem Witchcraft Papers vol 2* under Examination of Sarah Good.
- 241 Ibid.
- 242 Ibid. When asked “Who was it then that tormented the children” she replied “it was osburn.”
- 243 Ibid.
- 244 See, for example, Wikipedia contributors, “Bogomilism,” *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*, <http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Bogomilism&oldid=269572680> (accessed February 16, 2009). “The Bogomils taught that God had two sons, the elder Satanail and the younger Michael. The elder son rebelled against the father and became the evil spirit. After his fall he created the lower heavens and the earth.” Also see Wikipedia contributors, “Catharism,” *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*, <http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Catharism&oldid=270949401> (accessed

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February 16, 2009). “[M]any rejected the traditional view of the Old Testament — proclaiming that the God of the Old Testament was really the devil.”

- 245 Boyer and Nissenbaum, eds., *The Salem Witchcraft Papers vol 2* under Examination of Sarah Good.
- 246 Ibid, under William Allen, John Hughes, William Good, and Samuel Braybrook v. Sarah Good, Sarah Osborne, and Tituba.
- 247 Ibid, under Samuel Abbey and Mary Abbey v. Sarah Good.
- 248 Ibid.
- 249 Ibid.
- 250 I am not an expert on translations of the Bible. This is one view which has been expressed to me by numerous people. This right wing Protestant website, <http://www.chick.com/ask/articles/witch.asp>, states that it was not a mistranslation. According to it, God does not want us to suffer a witch to live.
- 251 See Suzan Stone Sierralupe, “Path of the Green Witch” at http://www.herbshealing.com/Article_Green_Witch.htm. This witch discusses the uses of plants to heal. A witch with bad motives could just as easily find plants to kill.
- 252 Boyer and Nissenbaum, eds., *The Salem Witchcraft Papers vol 2* under Sarah Gadge v. Sarah Good.
- 253 Boyer and Nissenbaum, eds., *The Salem Witchcraft Papers vol 2* under Thomas Gadge v. Sarah Good.
- 254 See D.P. Lyle, MD, “The Myth of the Untraceable Poison” available at <http://www.dplylemd.com/Articles/Poisonmyth.html>. “One of the most common questions I get from writers is: Is there a poison that can’t be found in a corpse? The answer is No. And Yes.” The people of 17th century New England would not have had access to any way of testing for poisons, so it had a far better chance of not being detected. But Dr. Lyle notes that a person today could get away with poisoning under the right circumstances.
- 255 Boyer and Nissenbaum, eds., *The Salem Witchcraft Papers vol 2*, under Henry Herrick and Jonathan Batchelor v. Sarah Good.

- 256 See, for example, Wikipedia contributors, "Tobacco," *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*, <http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Tobacco&oldid=270377971> (accessed February 17, 2009). This site will direct you to more information regarding the history of tobacco.
- 257 Daniel Wait Howe, *The Puritan Republic of the Massachusetts Bay in New England* (Indianapolis: The Bowen-Merrill company, 1899), available at <http://books.google.com>, 104-105. "Tobacco.—A vigorous and persistent war was waged against the use of tobacco. In 1632, the General Court forbade the taking of any tobacco 'publiquely.' In 1634 it was further ordered that no person should take tobacco, either 'publiquely or privately in another, before strangers & that two or more shall not take it together anywhere.' A short time afterwards the purchase and sale of tobacco was expressly prohibited. In 1637, the law against buying and selling tobacco was repealed, but other laws were subsequently enacted to discourage its use, all of which seem to have been unavailing."
- 258 Boyer and Nissenbaum, eds., *The Salem Witchcraft Papers vol 2* under William Allen, John Hughes, William Good, and Samuel Braybrook v. Sarah Good, Sarah Osborne, and Tituba. "William Allen further saith that on the 2^d day of march the s^d Sarah Good vissably appeared to him in his chamber s^d allen beeing in bed and brought an unuseuall light in wth her the s^d Sarah came and sate upon his foot the s^d allen went to kick att her upon which shee vanished and the light with her."
- 259 Ibid, under Summary of Evidence v. Sarah Good. "Dorothy Goods Charge ag^t. her mother Sarah Good. That she had three birds one black, one yellow & that these birds hurt the Children & afflicted persons. [H]er own Confession".
- 260 Ibid. "W^m Good. that she hath a strange Tett or wort".
- 261 Calef, *More Wonders*, 209.
- 262 The finest man on the bench was Samuel Sewall. Sewall would later author a tract against slavery. This was an unpopular position to take. See Eve Laplante, *The Life and Repentance of Samuel Sewall* (New York: HarperColins, 2007) 228-230. "Samuel

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received many ‘frowns and hard words’ in response to *The Selling of Joseph* . . . In a society that rejected racial equality – and had not yet conceived of civil rights – Samuel continued to work for these causes.” The judges of the court were not monsters. They were good men who thought that they were doing justice. At least one of those men was a great humanitarian and a civil rights activist. Samuel Sewall was a man of character and would not have witnessed this clear perjury and then disregarded it.

To review Sewall’s tract against slavery see Wikisource contributors, “The Selling of Joseph,” *Wikisource, The Free Library*, http://en.wikisource.org/w/index.php?title=The_Selling_of_Joseph&oldid=463133 (accessed February 18, 2009).

Thomas Hutchinson, who would serve as Governor of the Commonwealth almost a century later, also expressed some skepticism of this claim. See Thomas Hutchinson, *The Witchcraft Delusion of 1692*, available at <http://etext.lib.virginia.edu/etcbin/toccer-new2?id=HutPool.xml&images=images/modeng&data=/texts/english/modeng/parsed&tag=public&part=all>. He wrote regarding this incident “This account, *if true*, would give me a more unfavorable opinion even of the integrity of the court, if I had not met with something not unlike to it in the trials before Sir Matthew Hale. The afflicted children in their fits upon the least touch from Rose Cullender, one of the supposed witches, would shriek out, which they would not do when touched by any other person. Lest there should be any fraud, Lord Cornwallis, Sir Edmund Bacon, Sergeant Keeling and other gentlemen attended one of the girls whilst she was in her fits at another part of the hall, and one of the witches was brought, and an apron put before the girl’s eyes, but instead of the witch’s hand another person’s hand was taken to touch the girl, who thereupon shrieked out as she used to do. The gentlemen returned and declared to the court they believed the whole was an imposture. The witch was found guilty notwithstanding, and the judge and all the court wore fully satisfied with the verdict and awarded sentence accordingly.” Emphasis mine.

263 For an example of the interplay between poison and witchcraft see Jason Bennetto, “Torso boy swallowed witchcraft poison

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bean,” *The Independent*, October 17, 2003. “The boy known as Adam whose torso was found dumped in the river Thames was paralysed and killed by a poisonous bean used in African witchcraft.” Also, the confusion between the translation in the Bible over suffering a witch to live versus suffering a poisoner to live certainly indicates that the two are deeply related.

264 Burr, ed., *Narratives*, 258-287. The author reprinted an account from Cotton Mather of the incident.

265 Calef, *More Wonders*, 209.

266 Hansen, *Witchcraft*, 126.

267 Luke 23:34.

268 Rom. 12:14. “Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not.”

269 See Hansen, *Witchcraft*, 127. “[T]radition has it that twenty-five years later, when Nicholas Noyes lay dying, he choked upon the blood that poured copiously from his mouth. And when that happened, Salem remembered Sarah Good’s words with feels that were more than a little ambiguous. Hutchinson, who reported the tradition in his *History* of 1750, says that the people of Salem in his day still considered Sarah Good ‘if not a witch, a Pythonissa’ [someone possessed by a spirit and prophesying by its aid.]. Hansen’s citation is *History*, vol 2, p. 41 second footnote. This volume does not appear to be available on the internet. Hansen also refers the reader to Charles Wentworth Upham account in 1867. This is available on the internet. See Charles Wentworth Upham, *Salem Witchcraft: With an Account of Salem Village, and a History of Opinions on Witchcraft and Kindred Subjects* (Boston: Wiggin and Lunt, 1867) available at <http://books.google.com>, 270. “Hutchinson says that, in his day, there was a tradition among the people of Salem, and it has descended to the present time, that the manner of Mr. Noyes’s death strangely verified the prediction thus wrung from the incensed spirit of the dying woman. He was exceedingly corpulent, of a plethoric habit, and died of an internal hemorrhage, bleeding profusely at the mouth.”

270 See David Yonke, “Satanic aspects left out of trial; prosecutor

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says priest's murder of nun had cult hallmarks," *Toledo Blade*, May 13, 2006, <http://www.toledoblade.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20060513/NEWS02/605130372>; Mark Reiter, "Priest named in lawsuit that alleges ritual abuse," *Toledo Blade*, April 21, 2005, <http://www.toledoblade.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20050421/NEWS02/504210415/0/NEWS>; Michael D. Sallah and Mitch Weiss, "Dark allegations arise amid probe of nun's slaying," *Toledo Blade*, February 20, 2005, <http://toledoblade.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20050220/NEWS08/502200352&SearchID=73199948054601>.

271 Ibid.

272 Ibid, especially in regards to "Satanic aspects left out of trial . . ."

273 Fatima News Network, "Satanism is Practiced in the Vatican!" *Fatima News*, <http://www.fatima.org/news/newsviews/milsatanism.asp>.

274 See Fatima Network, "Information Request," *Fatima News*, <https://secure.fatima.org/forms/crusader.asp>. "It regularly features the work of major Fatima experts such as Frere Michel, Father Alonso and Father Paul Leonard as well as the writings of the saints and the penetrating news analysis by leading *conservative* commentators." Emphasis mine.

275 Fatima News Network, "The Story of Fatima," *The Fatima Network*, <http://www.fatima.org/essentials/facts/story1.asp>.

276 Fatima News Network, "Satanism is Practiced," *Fatima News*.

277 See Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, "Notification Regarding Archbishop Emmanuel Milingo," Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, July 16, 2001, at <http://www.catholicculture.org/culture/library/view.cfm?id=3937&repos=1&subrepos=0&searchid=416042>.

278 "Vatican pulls passport of excommunicated archbishop," *Catholic World News*, October 15, 2007, at <http://www.catholicculture.org/news/features/index.cfm?recnum=54161&repos=4&subrepos=1&searchid=416042>.

279 Johann Peter Kirsch, "Simon Magus," *The Catholic Encyclopedia*. Vol. 13. (New York: Robert Appleton Company, 1912.) at <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/13797b.htm>. "But, as was evident

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later, his conversion was not the result of the inner conviction of faith in Christ as the Redeemer, but rather from selfish motives, for he hoped to gain greater magical power and thus to increase his influence. For when the Apostles Peter and John came to Samaria to bestow on the believers baptized by Philip the outpouring of the Spirit which was accompanied by miraculous manifestations, Simon offered them money, desiring them to grant him what he regarded as magical power, so that he also by the laying on of hands could bestow the Holy Ghost, and thereby produce such miraculous results. Full of indignation at such an offer Peter rebuked him sharply, exhorted him to penance and conversion and warned him of the wickedness of his conduct. Under the influence of Peter's rebuke Simon begged the Apostles to pray for him (Acts 8:9-29). However, according to the unanimous report of the authorities of the second century, he persisted in his false views. The ecclesiastical writers of the early Church universally represent him as the first heretic, the 'Father of Heresies'."

280 Hansen, *Witchcraft*, 6.

281 Ibid, 77.

282 Ibid.

283 See, for example, Cotton Mather, *Wonders*, 17. "There are many parts of the World, who if they do upon this Occasion insult over this People of God, need only to be told the Story of what happen'd at Loim, in the Dutchy of Gulic, where a Popish Curate having ineffectually try'd many Charms to Eject the Devil out of a Damsel there possessed, he passionately bid the Devil come out of her into himself; but the Devil answered him, Quid mihi Opus, est eum tentare, quem Novissimo die, Jure Optimo, sum possessurus ? That is, What need I meddle with one whom I am sure to have, and hold at the Last-day as my own for ever!"

284 For example, see Anastasia Karson, "Revenge in the Salem Witchcraft Hysteria: The Putnam Family and George Burroughs" *Loyola University Student Historical Journal*, vol 30, http://www.loyno.edu/history/journal/1998-9/documents/RevengeintheSalemWitchcraftHysteria_ThePutnamFamilyandGeorgeBurroughs.pdf. "The members of the Putnam family were significant contributors to this aspect of the

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hysteria. Their greatest victim was George Burroughs, a former minister of Salem Village.”

285 John Wesley Hanson, *History of the Town of Danvers, from Its Early Settlement to the Year 1848* (Danvers: John Wesley Hanson, 1848) at <http://books.google.com>, 225.

286 See Rosenthal, *Salem Story*, 149-150.

287 Ibid.

288 There are a variety of theories as to the genetic makeup of British people that are complex and unnecessary to spell out.

289 Laplante, *Salem Witch Judge*, 164-169.

290 Ibid.

291 Ibid.

292 Calef, *More Wonders*, 9.

293 See Rosenthal, *Salem Story*, 131. “The history of the Puritan controversy with the Baptists was long and complex, but by 1692 the power to suppress Baptist theology had almost completely evaporated. 142, “[Increase Mather had assured] the Queen of England that he tolerated [religious dissenters such as Baptists].

294 Ibid.

295 “Important Persons in the Salem Court Records ,” (The Salem Witch Trials Documentary Archive and Transcription Project) at <http://www2.iath.virginia.edu/saxon-salem/servlet/SaxonServlet?source=salem/texts/names.xml&style=salem/xsl/dynaxml.xsl&group.num=all&mbio.num=mb3&clear-stylesheet-cache=yes>. “George Burroughs was the only Puritan minister indicted and executed in Salem in 1692. He served as minister of Salem Village from 1680 until he left in 1683.”

Also see, “SALEM VILLAGE RECORD BOOK Transcription published in installments in The Historical Collections of the Danvers Historical Society, 1924-1931” (Danvers: Danvers Historical Society) at Electronic Text Center, University of Virginia Library, at <http://etext.virginia.edu/>. “The: 25th of November: 1680voat att a meeting of the Inhabitants of the Farmes that it was agreed that Mr. Burroughs for his mentenance amongst us

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Is to Have for the year ensewing sixty pounds in and as many one third part in money certain the other two thirds In provision att money prise as followeth “[16] The 24th Day of May: 1683: Att A Meeting of The Inhabitants of Salem village It was voated That sarjant Fuller is Desiered to write to Mr. Lawson to come to preach with us on the next saboth Day come sennettnextly voated that the Committe shall Make a Ratte of fiveteen pounds for Mr. Burroughs for the Last quarter of a year He preached with us.”

- 296 “Important Persons” (The Salem Witch Trials Documentary). “As one of the succession of three ministers who left the Village in the years leading up to the trials, he became involved in the Village’s social conflicts.”
- 297 Ibid. “During his stay in Salem he borrowed money from the Putnam family and when he was unable to pay it back, conflict with the Putnams arose. It was at this point that he left. Although he eventually repaid his loan”
- 298 Wikipedia contributors, “George Burroughs,” *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*, http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=George_Burroughs&oldid=269683299 (accessed February 28, 2009). Wikipedia contributors are not shy about claiming that Burroughs was killed over the money he previously owned. “In May 1692, during the Salem witch trials, based on the accusation of some of his personal enemies from his former congregation who had sued him for debt, Burroughs was arrested and charged, among other offenses, with extraordinary weight lifting of a musket with a finger in the barrel and such feats of strength as could not be done without diabolical assistance.”
- 299 There is simply no credible evidence of him serving as anything but a Puritan minister. He never asserted at his trial that he was a religious dissenter.
- 300 See Calef, *More Wonders*, 212. Calef had no apparent motive to lie about these particular facts.
- 301 See Cotton Mather, *Diary of Cotton Mather, 1681-1724* (Boston: Massachusetts Historical Society, 1911) at <http://books.google.com>, 142. “but all agreeing in Burroughs being their Ringleader, who, I suppose, this Day receives his Trial at Salem, whither

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a Vast Concourse of people is gone; My Father, this morning among the Rest.”

See Cotton Mather, *Wonders*, 286. Increase Mather’s remarks are published. He wrote, “I was not myself present at any of the Tryals, excepting one, viz. that of *George Burroughs* ; had I been one of Ins Judges, I could not have acquitted him.”

- 302 Cotton Mather, *Wonders*, 286. Again, Increase Mather wrote, “I am glad that there is published to the World (by my Son) a *Breviate of the Tryal* of some who were lately executed, whereby I hope the thinking part of Mankind will be satisfied, that there was more than that which is called *Spectre Evidence* for the Conviction of the Persons condemned.”
- 303 Laplante, *Salem Witch Judge*, 165. “Samuel [Sewall] and Burroughs had kept up a friendly correspondence. . . . Samuel was not the only player in the drama with personal links to George Burroughs. Judge Hathorne . . . was related to Burroughs by marriage.”
- 304 Cotton Mather, *Wonders*, 120.
- 305 Boyer and Nissenbaum, eds., *The Salem Witchcraft Papers vol 3* under Examination of Tituba -- A Second Version. “A. black Cloaths Some times, Some times Searge Coat of other Couler, a Tall man w’th white hayr, I think.”
- 306 Cotton Mather, *Wonders*, 125. “He was a very Puny Man”
- 307 Ibid, 123. “G.B. had been Infamous for the Barbarous usage of his two late Wives, all the Country over.”
- 308 Ibid. “[O]ne of the Bewitched Persons was cast into Horror at the Ghost of *B*’s two Deceased Wives then appearing before him, and crying for *Vengeance* against him. Hereupon several of the Bewitched Persons were successively called in, who all not knowing what the former had seen and said, concurred in their Horror of the Apparition, which they affirmed that he had before him.”
- 309 Boyer and Nissenbaum, eds., *The Salem Witchcraft Papers vol I*, under Examination of George Burroughs and Summary of Evidence. “He de-nyed that he made his wife swear, that she

should not write to her Father Ruck without his approbation of her letter to her Father.” Burroughs’s denial, however, was likely not believed by the court.

- 310 Cotton Mather, *Wonders*, 126.
- 311 Ibid, 126 – 127. “That he has brought them to the point of Death. by his harsh Dealings with his Wives, and then made the People about him, to promise that in case Death should happen, they would say nothing of it;”
- 312 Ibid, 127.
- 313 Ibid, 127 – 128.
- 314 Hansen, *Witchcraft*, 75-76.
- 315 Ibid, 76. “[T]he Christian God does not deal in the occult, particularly at the level of family gossip”
- 316 Rosenthal, *Salem Story*, 150. “[T]he accused minister mounted an aggressive defense.”
- 317 See Increase Mather, *Cases*, as reprinted in *Wonders*, 282. “And have not men been seen to do things which are above humane Strength, that no man living could do without Diabolical Assistances ? *Claudia* was seen by Witnesses enough, to draw a Ship which no humane Strength could move. *Tuccia* a Vestal Virgin was seen to carry Water in a Sieve”
- 318 Cotton Mather, *Wonders*, 125 – 126. “A Gun of about seven foot Barrel, and so heavy that strong Men could not steadily hold it out with both hands; there were several Testimonies, given in by Persons of Credit and Honor, that he made nothing of taking up such a Gun behind the Lock, with but one hand, and holding it out like a Pistol, at Arms-end. *G. B.* in his Vindication, was so foolish as to say, That *an Indian was there, and held it out at the same time*: Whereas none of the Spectators ever saw any such *Indian*; but they supposed, the *Black Man*, (as the Witches call the Devil; and they generally say he resembles an *Indian*) might give him that Assistance.”
- 319 Ibid, 126. “There was Evidence likewise brought in, that he made nothing of taking up whole Barrels fill’d with *Molasses* or

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Cider, in very disadvantageous Postures, and Carrying of them through the difficultest Places out of a Canoo to the Shore.”

- 320 Ibid. “Yea, there were two Testimonies, that *G. B.* with only putting the Fore Finger of his Right hand into the Muzzle of an heavy Gun, a Fowling-piece of about six or seven foot Barrel, did lift up the Gun, and hold it out at Arms- end ; a Gun which the Deponents thought strong Men could not with both hands lift up, and hold out at the But- end, as is usual.”
- 321 Boyer and Nissenbaum, eds., *The Salem Witchcraft Papers vol I*, under Mary Webber v. George Burroughs.
- 322 Boyer and Nissenbaum, eds., *The Salem Witchcraft Papers vol I*, under Examination of George Burroughs and Summary of Evidence. “Being askt w’n he partook of the Lords supper, he being (as he said) in full comunion at Roxbury. He answered it was so long since he could not tell: yet he owned he was at meeting one Sab: at Boston part of the day, & the oth-er at Charlestown part of a Sab: when that sacrament happened to be at both, yet did not partake of either. . . . He owned that none of his children, but the eldest was Baptized.”
- 323 Rosenthal, *Salem Story*, 129 – 150.
- 324 Enoch Pond, *The Lives of Increase Mather and Sir William Phipps* (Boston: Massachusetts Sabbath school society, 1847) at <http://books.google.com>, 77. Speaking first of Increase, the author noted that “At an early period, he assisted in ordaining the pastor of a Baptist church in his immediate neighborhood; and Cotton Mather, speaking of the state of things in New England at a later period, says : ‘Calvinists with Lutherans, Presbyterians with Episcopalians, Pedit- baptists with Anabaptists, beholding one another *to fear God and work righteousness*, do with delight sit down together at the same table of the Lord; nor do they hurt one another in the holy mountain.’” Although the author did write that both were critical of toleration at earlier parts of their careers. Increase Mather was certainly in the later part of his career at the time of the witch trials and likely would have assisted in the ordination of the Baptist minister prior to Burroughs’s trial. So

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the notion that Increase Mather wanted Burroughs killed because Burroughs was a Baptist is completely wrong and illogical.

325 M.G. Hall, ed., *The Autobiography of Increase Mather* (American Antiquarian Society: 1961) 334, cited in Rosenthal, *Salem Story*, 142 and quoted on 249.

326 Another case of a mysterious man who only Burroughs could see?

327 Cotton Mather, *Wonders*, 128 – 129.

328 See Increase Mather, *Cases*, 286 as reprinted in Cotton Mather, *Wonders*. “I hope the thinking part of Mankind will be satisfied, that there was more than that which is called Spectre Evidence for the Conviction of the Persons condemned. I was not myself present at any of the Tryals, excepting one, vis. that of George Burroughs; had I been one of bis Judges, I could not have acquitted him : For several Persons did upon Oath testifie, that they saw him do such things as no Man that has not a Devil to be his Familiar could perform : And the Judges affirm, that they have not convicted any one meerly on the account of what Spectres have said, or of what has been represented to the Eyes or Imaginations of the sick bewitched Persons.” Increase Mather’s statements were overly optimistic about the court as it is clear that in some cases (especially with Rebeca Nurse) the court only relied on spectral evidence. However, in this trial, which he attended, there was clearly sufficient evidence, if believed, for a conviction.

329 Hale, *A Modest Inquiry*.

330 Calef, *More Wonders*, 212 – 213.

331 Laplante, *Salem Witch Judge*, 169. I could not find her citation for the original source. It appears to be missing. This part of Sewall’s diary is not yet online, but I am confident that this account of Sewall’s writing is accurate.

332 This view was so widespread that even the court considered it as a possible factor in its questions. See Boyer and Nissenbaum, eds., *The Salem Witchcraft Papers vol 3* under Examination of John Willard.

“Can you pray the Lords prayer?”

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Yes

Let us hear you.

He stumbled at the thresh hold & said Maker of heaven & earth”

- 333 Hansen, *Witchcraft*, 49. “Another such test was asking the accused to repeat the Lord’s Prayer. It was believed that a witch could not say it correctly, even after prompting, since she regularly said it backwards at her witch’s Sabbaths Many of the learned, including Increase Mather and Deodat Lawson, rejected such tests outright as superstitions or as white magic or both.
- 334 Ibid. “Others, like Cotton Mather, were willing to countenance experiments with them but refused to accept them as certain evidence.”
- 335 Kenneth Murdock, *Increase Mather* (Cambridge: 1926) 315-316 as cited in Hansen, *Witchcraft*, 205. Hansen, citing Murdock, notes, “As Kenneth Murdock has pointed out, every single judge from the Special Court of Oyer and Terminer was elected to the Governor’s Council in 1693, and Sewall got more votes than Nathaniel Saltonstall, who had resigned from the court. Massachusetts politics after 1692 shows no trace of popular resentment against the judges. Indeed, the opposite is true; there is every reason to believe that Massachusetts still had confidence in the judges.
- 336 Hansen, *Witchcraft* 123 – 127. Much of Hansen’s book is actually dedicated to vindicating the clergy for their role in the trials.
- 337 Rosenthal, *Salem Story*, 144 – 145.
- 338 Ibid, 145.
- 339 For example, see *Essex Institute Historical Collection*, IX (2nd series vol. I) part II, 89 -90 as cited in Hansen, *Witchcraft*, 206 – 207. When Governor Phips consulted the Royal Court for advice after he put a hold on the trials, he was told by Queen Mary “that in all proceedings against persons accused for witchcraft or being possessed by the Devil the greatest moderation and all due circumspection be used . . .” This was a vaguely worded blessing of his decision to stop the trials. No one was executed for witchcraft in New England after this.

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- 340 This is the opinion of Wikipedia contributors and is, as usual, wrong. See Wikipedia contributors, “George Burroughs,” *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*, http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=George_Burroughs&oldid=269683299 (accessed March 2, 2009). “But the death of George Burroughs brought about a change in attitudes amongst the citizens of Essex County and was a contributing factor to the end of the hysteria.”
- 341 See Maps, (The Salem Witch Trials Documentary Archive and Transcription Project) at <http://www2.iath.virginia.edu/salem/maps/>.
- 342 This information is from Calef, but there is no particular reason to think that he was lying about this. See Calef, *More Wonders*, 223.
- 343 Boyer and Nissenbaum, eds., *The Salem Witchcraft Papers vol 3* under Samuel Wardwell Executed, September 22, 1692.
- 344 Ibid.
- 345 Ibid.
- 346 As cited in Cotton Mather, *Wonders*, 33.
- 347 Ibid, 32.
- 348 Ibid.
- 349 Ibid.
- 350 Boyer and Nissenbaum, eds., *The Salem Witchcraft Papers vol 3* under Ephraim Foster v. Samuel Wardwell.
- 351 Boyer and Nissenbaum, eds., *The Salem Witchcraft Papers vol 3* under Thomas Chandler v. Samuel Wardwell.
- 352 Boyer and Nissenbaum, eds., *The Salem Witchcraft Papers vol 3* Abigail Martin and John Bridges v. Samuel Wardwell.
- 353 See note 317.
- 354 1 Samuel 28:3-25.
- 355 Boyer and Nissenbaum, eds., *The Salem Witchcraft Papers vol 3* under Joseph Ballard v. Samuel Wardwell.
- 356 Boyer and Nissenbaum, eds., *The Salem Witchcraft Papers vol 3* under Examination of Samuel Wardwell. “Sam’l Wardwell: owned: to the grand Inquest: that: the above written: Confession:

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was; taken: from his mouth and that he had said it: but: he s'd he belyed: himselfe: he also s'd it was alone one: he: knew he should dye for it: whether: he ownd it or no Sept'r 13'th 1692."

- 357 Rosenthal, *Salem Story*, 156. "Samuel Wardwell believed he was headed for the gallows in any event. He probably miscalculated." This seems like a correct argument.
- 358 Ibid. Rosenthal compared Wardwell's situation to that of Doras Hoar. Hoar was also condemned to die with Wardwell, having previously maintained her innocence in her trial, but later received a reprieve after she confessed.
- 359 Ibid, 151 – 158. This is essentially Rosenthal's argument and not a bad one.
- 360 Boyer and Nissenbaum, eds., *The Salem Witchcraft Papers vol 3* under Examination of Samuel Wardwell.
- 361 Perhaps he was really dealing with a Nigerian conman and not Satan.
- 362 Boyer and Nissenbaum, eds., *The Salem Witchcraft Papers vol 3* under Examination of Samuel Wardwell. Regarding the Devil getting angry at prayer, Wardwell said only "And further that when he would goe to prayer in his family the devil wold begin to be angry." It is not clear how the Devil expressed this anger to Wardwell.
- 363 Ibid. Rosenthal would clearly see the part about baptism as a sign that the court was concerned with religious dissenters as well as witches. See Rosenthal, *Salem Story*, 133 and 157.
- 364 There is simply no hint that he was tortured or subjected to any harsh forms of interrogation. Of course, mental coercion could have occurred. See Boyer and Nissenbaum, eds., *The Salem Witchcraft Papers vol 3* under Petition of the Andover Ministers and Twenty-Two Others -- October 1692. "But whereas it may be alledged, that the most of our people that have been apprehended for witchcraft, have upon Examination confessed it. To which we Answer that we have nothing to plead for those that freely and upon conviction own themselves guilty; but we apprehend the case of some of them to be otherwise. for from the information

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we have had and the discourse some of us have had with the prisoners, we have reason to think that the extream urgency that was used with some of them by their friends and others who privately examined them, and the fear they were then under, hath been an inducement to them to own such things, as we cannott since find they are conscious of; and the truth of what we now declare, we judge will in time more plainly appear. And some of them have exprest to their neighbours that it hath been their great trouble, that they have wronged themselves and the truth in their confessions.” Also, here is another case of ministers showing restraint and concern for justice and not leading the charge for prosecutions, despite the fact that they accepted the reality and danger of witchcraft (calling it “so horrid a crime”).

- 365 Calef, *More Wonders*, 221.
- 366 Hansen, *Witchcraft*, 205 – 207.
- 367 Ibid, 70.
- 368 Ibid, 86.
- 369 Ibid, 70 – 71.
- 370 Ibid, 71. Hansen wrote that she “had for many years been the town witch of Marblehead.” But he offers no citation to support this claim.
- 371 Boyer and Nissenbaum, eds., *The Salem Witchcraft Papers vol 3* under Indictment v. Wilmott Reed, No. 1. “That Willmott Redd Wife of Samuel Redd of Marblehead In the County of Essex fisherman”
- 372 Ibid, under Examination of Wilmott Reed.
- 373 Ibid.
- 374 Ibid, under Charity Pitman v. Wilmott Reed, Sarah Dodd v. Wilmott Reed, and Ambrose Gale v. Wilmott Reed.
- 375 Hansen, *Witchcraft*, 92.
- 376 Boyer and Nissenbaum, eds., *The Salem Witchcraft Papers vol 1* under Examination of Candy.
- 377 Hale, *Modest Enquiry*, 80 as cited in Hansen, *Witchcraft*, 240.
- 378 Hansen, *Witchcraft*, 71. “It does not seem to have occurred

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to anyone at the time that in experimenting with these charms the magistrates were themselves practicing witchcraft, and with dramatic and conspicuous success.”

379 Ibid.

380 Boyer and Nissenbaum, eds., *The Salem Witchcraft Papers vol 1* under Indictment v. Candy, No. 1 and Indictment v. Candy, No. 2. “Candy Negro: for bewitching Mary Wallcott Billa Vera, *Robert Payne foreman. Ponet Se. The juery find the person here inditted not guilty of this indittement.” “Candy Negro: for bewitching Ann Putnum Billa Vera, *Robert Payne foreman Ponet Se. The juery find the person here inditted not guilty of this indittement.”

381 Although the governor granted them clemency.

382 Plato, *The Republic of Plato: an Ideal Commonwealth*, trans. Benjamin Jowett, Thomas Taylor, John Llewelyn Davies, David James Vaughan (Oxford: The Colonial Press, 1888), 142.

383 See, for example, B.A. Robinson, “Is Wicca a form of Satanism?” Ontario Consultants on Religious Tolerance, September 11, 2000, last updated January 28, 2008. http://www.religioustolerance.org/wic_sata.htm.

384 Ibid.

385 For example, see Peter M. Stravinskias, *The Catholic Answer Book, Book 3* (Our Sunday Visitor Publishing: 1998), preview available at <http://books.google.com>, 64.

386 See, for example, B.A. Robinson, “Winter Solstice celebrations: a.k.a. Christmas, Saturnalia, Yule, the Long Night, etc.” Ontario Consultants on Religious Tolerance, December 3, 1999, last updated December 23, 2007. http://www.religioustolerance.org/winter_solstice.htm.

387 See Hansen, *Witchcraft*, 3-4.

388 For an interesting article on this see Doug Ward, “COTTON MATHER’S DILEMMA: CHRISTMAS IN PURITAN NEW ENGLAND,” Unity in Christ. <http://www.unityinchrist.com/history/print/cotton.htm>.

389 For example, a person who is known only as “Heather” has set up

a website with free spells at <http://www.everythingunderthemoon.net/bookofshadows.htm>.

- 390 B.A. Robinson, "Is Wicca a form of Satanism?". http://www.religioustolerance.org/wic_sata.htm. "Their rule of behavior is called the Wiccan Rede: "An it harm none, do what thou wilt." i.e. do whatever you wish, as long as it harms no one, including yourself. Unlike Satanists, Wiccans are not allowed do dominate, manipulate, control, or harm others."
- 391 Wikipedia contributors, "Parcae," *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*, <http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Parcae&oldid=278557657> (accessed March 27, 2009). While not my favorite source, this information is not controversial nor is it the main subject of this book. The reader can research this issue in more detail if he/she wants to.
- 392 This point was made to me personally by a friend who considered himself Wiccan.
- 393 This was also Plato's view of God and the gods. See Plato, *The Republic*, 62. "Then God, if he be good, is not the author of all things, as the many assert, but he is the cause of a few things only, and not of most things that occur to men. For few are the goods of human life, and many are the evils, and the good is to be attributed to God alone; of the evils the causes are to be sought elsewhere, and not in him." 75. "We will not have them trying to persuade our youth that the gods are the authors of evil . . . sentiments which, as we were saying, are neither pious nor true, for we have already proved that evil cannot come from the gods."
- 394 There are various discussions of this point in different sources. For one example see William J. Byron, S.J., "Why isn't God answering my prayer?" *Catholic Digest*. <http://www.catholicdigest.com/article/why-isnt-god-answering-my-prayer>. "Consider the distinction between the positive and permissive will of God. God *permits*, but does not positively *will* bad things to happen -- permits suffering for some good but mysterious reason."
- 395 For example, see Cotton Mather, *Wonders*, 48.
- 396 This is a controversial statement. Many, including Puritans, may

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have argued that we have no free will. But this seems to fly in the face of reason.

397 I encourage the readers to think about and to discuss this issue in greater detail in order to figure out the truth.

398 It is important to remember that this is a work of fiction. Thomas Moore was not a civil libertarian and he supported the persecution of religious dissenters. He had the bad luck to become a religious dissenter after the winds of change blew through England.

399 Robert Bolt, *A Man for all Seasons* (Heinemann, 1996), preview available at <http://books.google.com>, 39.

400 A comparison to the War on Drugs and how that has eroded our Constitution is apt as well and worthy of further discussion by the readers of this book.

401 At the time of editing, the Obama regime has begun. It is hoped that he will correct abuses such as this from the Bush regime.

402 See, for example, Jane Mayer, "Outsourcing Torture The secret history of America's 'extraordinary rendition' program," *The New Yorker*, February 14, 2005, http://www.newyorker.com/archive/2005/02/14/050214fa_fact6.

403 Caroline Fredrickson and Christopher E. Anders, "ACLU Letter to the Senate Armed Forces Committee Urging Strong Questioning of Attorney General Gonzales and Deputy Defense Secretary Gordon England Regarding Detainees," *ACLU*, July 31, 2006.

404 See, for example, Andrew C. McCarthy, "De-Commissioned Will Pentagon blunders mean the end of military trials for terrorists?" *National Review Online*, May 19, 2008, <http://article.nationalreview.com/?q=OWM3YjAwNmQ2YWVjY2U3Njc5YmRjMTVhOGU2MWU0NGQ=&w=MA==>. "We are talking only about terrorists we already know are terrorists."

405 See Matthew L. Levine, "When Breaching Terms of Service Is a Crime," *New York Law Journal*, March 20, 2009, <http://www.law.com/jsp/legaltechnology/pubArticleLT.jsp?id=1202429211620>. Or just do an internet search of "Lori Drew" for additional information.

406 Ibid.

407 Ibid.

408 Ibid.

409 For example, see Jon Healey, “More thoughts on the Lori Drew case,” *Los Angeles Times*, December 4, 2008, <http://opinion.latimes.com/opinionla/2008/12/lori-drew-myspa.html>. “A jury in Los Angeles recently found her guilty of violating a federal law against computer hacking (the Computer Fraud and Abuse Act), and we opined that the charges never should have been filed. Readers who didn’t like (OK, *despised* would be more precise) the piece, which essentially called for the judge to throw out the guilty verdict, made a “by any means necessary” argument that went something like this: any adult who torments a vulnerable child through the Internet should be punished, regardless of the legal niceties.”

410 Time will judge this statement. But one would be hard pressed to find a legal scholar who agreed with the verdict.

411 Such an award doesn’t exist, but should. Although guilty persons were executed at Salem, others were convicted on flimsy and sometimes simply spectral evidence. Those convictions were not sound and but for public outrage over witchcraft would never have been rendered.

412 Hansen, *Witchcraft*, 148. It is impossible to know this for sure. There were no public opinion polls. But the clear historical consensus is that the trials were not driven by the clergy, but rather by public opinion. As was pointed out previously (note 335) all of the judges of the witch court were elected the next year to the Governor’s Council.

413 Ibid, 157–158. Much of Hansen’s book actually documents statements made by the clergy in North America at the time that were critical of the trials at Salem and the type of evidence that was used there.

414 Increase Mather, *Cases*, as reprinted in *Wonders*, 255. Mather wrote “This then I declare and testifie, that to take away the life of any one, meerly because a Spectre or Devil, in a bewitched or possessed Person does accuse them, will bring the Guilt of innocent Blood on the Land, where such a thing shall be done: Mercy forbid that it should, (and I trust that as it has not it never

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be so) in New-England.” Either Mather was willfully blinding himself to the what was happening at Salem, or he was merely trying to be polite to the court by not alleging that it had taken innocent blood. I suspect the latter. There would have been no reason for him to give this impassioned warning unless he really did believe that the court was convicting on the basis of spectral evidence alone and innocent people had been put to death.

415 Ibid, 283.

416 For example, see Rosenthal, *Salem Story*, 194.

417 Ibid, 192 – 195.

418 Hansen, *Witchcraft*, 205.

419 Ibid, 205 – 207.

420 Hale, *A Modest Inquiry*.

421 Ibid.

422 Calef, *More Wonders*, 285 – 286.

423 Burr, ed., *Narratives*, 386 – 387.

424 Wm. Thaddeus Harris, trans., *Salem Village Church Record Book*.

425 Ibid.

426 Rosenthal, *Salem Story*, 91.

427 Ibid, 177.

428 Ibid.

429 Hansen, *Witchcraft*, 216.

430 Ibid, 217 – 219.

431 Ibid.

432 Cotton Mather, *Wonders*, 138.

433 For example, see Ibid, 141. “*Bernard Peache* testifi’d, That being in Bed, on the Lord’s-day Night, he heard a scrabbling at the Window, whereat he then saw *Susanna Martin* come in, and jump down upon the Floor. She took hold of this Deponent’s Feet, and drawing his Body up into an Heap, she lay upon him near Two Hours; in all which time he could neither speak nor stir.”

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434 Ibid, 138 – 148.

435 Ibid.

436 Boyer and Nissenbaum, eds., *The Salem Witchcraft Papers vol 2*,
under Case 42 Alice Parker Executed, September 22, 1692.

437 Boyer and Nissenbaum, eds., *The Salem Witchcraft Papers vol 3*,
under Case 7 Margaret Scott Executed, September 22, 1692.

